



The Nebraska Library Board Manual

2006 Edition

Introduction & Acknowledgements

Selection, Organization, Orientation and Evaluation
of Library Boards

Public Libraries, Trustees and the Law

Policies

Intellectual Freedom

Public Library Accreditation

Certification for Library Boards and Public Librarians

Trustees and Planning

Budgeting and Funding

Personnel

Connecting the Library with the Community: Public & Community Relations

Library Organizations & Associations

Advisory Boards

Glossary

Index

Calendar Pocket Guide

THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION



The purpose of this manual is to assist library board members by

- Clarifying the function and operation of the library board.
- Providing guidelines for policy development.
- Noting the laws that relate to library operation.
- Describing the processes for board certification, librarian certification, and library accreditation.
- Supplying direction for the planning process.
- Offering tips for creating budgets and dealing with personnel items.
- Encouraging advocacy activities.

Please note that the terms “library board” and “board members” as used in this manual are interchangeable with “board of trustees” and “library trustees.” Although most library boards in Nebraska are “governing boards,” there are some that are “advisory boards,” and some that are a “hybrid” version. In this manual, “library board” refers to a governing board, unless the term “advisory” is specifically used.

This manual includes references and links to additional materials within each chapter, with sample forms provided at the end of some chapters. Discussion guides at the end of the chapters will help you review parts of the manual at a board meeting and earn continuing education credit for the board. The manual is also available online at: www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/neboardmanual. The entire manual or specific sections may be printed.

As the library board uses this manual, please complete the feedback forms at the end of the chapters to offer any suggestions you have about content that is not clear or complete, or information that you need but do not find in the manual. Periodic revisions will be done based on your suggestions.

In the more than 270 public libraries in Nebraska, from those in small communities to those in large cities, all library boards have some things in common. But there is also a variety of ways in which they function and work with their local governments. This manual is intended to provide basic information and guidance. For specific questions that arise in your library, you are encouraged to contact the Nebraska Library Commission, regional library systems, or work with your local government officials for clarification.

Thank you for serving your community and your library as a board member. Your public service represents the type of citizen involvement that keeps our communities viable, and assures the future of libraries.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The committee that revised this manual used the results of the 2004-2005 Trustee Survey to determine what to include. That survey was written and administered by Hywanah (Lynn) Bradman, as part of her PhD studies. Final revisions to the manual were made based on feedback from board members to the draft copy of this document. Thank you to those library board members and library staff who were involved in this process.

The actual writing and editing were completed by the following people:

Pam Scott and Richard Miller, Nebraska Library Commission staff; Kathy Ellerton and Cherie Longmuir, regional system administrators; Pam Bohmfalk and Lisa Olivigni, librarians; Felicia Cogley, Charles Gardner and Maggie Harding, TUFS members.

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THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

CHAPTER 1

Selection, Organization, Orientation and Evaluation of Library Boards



What is a library board?

A library board is a group of citizens responsible for the governing of a public library. Board members are the vital link between the library and its community. Board members serve as library advocates and leaders in developing responsible and creative library service to all members of the public. They are volunteers who serve their community with no financial compensation. Members may be reimbursed, however, for any reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of library business.

With few exceptions, Nebraska public library boards are administrative/governing boards and carry responsibility for the library and its policies. Traditionally, library boards have had the power to control library expenditures and to make rules and regulations for library use. Boards also have been empowered to hire the library director and to establish personnel policies. They have had the authority to own property and see to its maintenance as well. In some Nebraska communities, some of these administrative responsibilities are shared with or supervised by municipal officials or staff, and the board functions as both a governing/administrative and an advisory board.

It is a violation of sound administrative standards when the library director independently changes or fails to follow established library board policy or when the library board engages in direct management of the library.

How are public library boards established?

The *Nebraska Revised State Statutes* provide for the establishment of library boards under Chapter 51. Trustees should be familiar with these particular statutes, which are reprinted in the Nebraska Library Commission publication, *Nebraska Laws Pertaining to Libraries & Library Operations*. The library board also should be familiar with local ordinances that established the library, set the number of board members, etc.

Some statutes that may prove helpful are:

Nebraska Statutes: Chapter 51. Libraries and Museums

51-202. (1) When any city council or village board decides by ordinance to establish and maintain a public library and reading room under sections 51-201 to 51-219, the city council or village board shall establish a library board. The library board shall have at least five members. Neither the mayor nor any member of the city council or village board shall be a member of the library board. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2) of this section, the city council or village board shall by ordinance determine the number of members, whether the members are elected or appointed, and the length of the terms of the members. The terms of members serving on the effective date of a change in the number of members shall not be shortened, and the city council or village board shall provide for the appointment or election of their successors. In cases of vacancies by resignation, removal, or otherwise, the city council or village board shall fill such vacancy for the unexpired term. No member shall receive any pay or compensation for any services rendered as a member of the board.

(2) If the city council or village board by ordinance provides for appointment of the members to the library board, such library board members shall be appointed by a majority vote of the members of the city council or village board. If an interlocal agreement, a memorandum of understanding, or any other contractual agreement between the city or village and another political subdivision providing for the library services allows representation from the other political subdivision on the library board from outside the city or village, the governing board of the other political subdivision may appoint one or more members to the library board as provided in the interlocal agreement, memorandum of understanding, or other contractual agreement.

(3) If the city council or village board adopts an ordinance to provide for the election of library board members at municipal elections in April, it shall follow the statutes governing municipal elections. If the municipal election is to be held in conjunction with the statewide primary election, the election shall be held as provided in the Election Act. If the board members are to be elected, the city council or village board shall give public notice of such election after the adoption of such ordinance naming the offices to be filled, the length of terms, and the filing deadline for the placing of names of candidates on the ballot.

How are library boards selected?

According to Chapter 51 of the Nebraska Statutes, library boards may be appointed by the governing body of the city or village or elected by popular vote. The city council or the village board decides how the library board members are to be chosen. Note: See “Residency Requirement for Nebraska Public Library Board,” <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/trustees/residency.html>.

What makes an effective library board?

Each library board member will bring to the board certain strengths--skills, talents and personal experience that uniquely serve the library. A well-balanced board can bring in less-experienced members who provide new viewpoints and who learn while serving. Expert knowledge in a professional or technical discipline is valuable for specific undertakings. Some boards rely almost entirely on their members for advice in such fields as construction, law or finance, while other boards make extensive use of consultants, advisory boards or volunteers for information.

The board as a whole should represent a broad spectrum of community interests, occupations and areas. A board consisting of diverse viewpoints assures that the library will serve the total community. The competence necessary to fulfill all board responsibilities should be present in the composition of the board as a whole.

Collectively the library board should strive to have:

- Business management and financial experience.
- Diversity in age, race and gender.
- Legal knowledge.
- Occupational diversity.
- Political awareness.
- Varied socio-economic backgrounds.

How long should a board member serve?

The number of reappointments by a governing body is not stipulated by Nebraska statutes, but local ordinances should be consulted to verify if there are any regulations pertaining to term limits of library board members. If there are no local ordinances that determine board member term limits, a library board might want to evaluate whether it is beneficial to the community to have board members serve indefinitely. Continuity of service provides for the wisdom of experience, but change provides the essential infusion of new ideas. Both are needed.

Former board members could contribute to the library and community through a number of ways:

- Help fundraise.
- Participate in a committee.
- Volunteer in a project.
- Provide occasional needed expertise.
- Become active in the local Friends of the Library or library foundation.

Board members should continue to recruit and encourage qualified potential trustees. To assist a library board with determining reappointments, there are recommendations made by the Nebraska Library Association and the Nebraska Library Commission that members of library boards serve no more than two consecutive terms. In addition, the "Excellent" level of the *Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation* from the Nebraska Library Commission states: "6. Library board members serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. . . ."

If a vacancy occurs prior to the expiration of a board member's term, the position is filled in the same manner that appointments are made, and the new appointee completes the unexpired term. The filling of a vacancy does not constitute a whole term.

What are boards responsible for?

Under the powers of administrative/governing boards granted by law, boards make operating and administrative policies. The board acts as an agent of public trust governing the library. The library director is responsible for the internal management, daily operation and procedures of the library. The director exercises professional judgment under the direction and the review of the board to implement the goals, objectives and policies set by the board.

There are five areas of library governance that stand out as primary responsibilities for library boards. They are to:

- Make everyone in the community aware of the library.
- Secure adequate financial support.
- Hire a competent director when the position becomes vacant.
- Develop policies.
- Encourage continued growth and development of library staff.

The duties and responsibilities of library board members and the library director may appear to overlap. Understanding the differences in function assures teamwork and better library service. Following is a chart of related responsibilities of the library board and of the library director.

Responsibilities of Library Board	Responsibilities of Library Director
To select and evaluate the library director, if applicable, and to work through the director, following the established chain of command in the library	To act as technical advisor to the board and to recommend employment of all personnel and supervise their work
To establish and regularly review all policies related to the library	To carry out the policies of the library as adopted by the board and to recommend needed policies for board action.
To aid in the active promotion of the library in the community	To maintain an active program of public relations
To help develop and defend the library's annual budget before funding agencies, receive reports and approve expenditures at board meetings, and seek additional funding as appropriate	To prepare an annual budget for the library in consultation with the board and to give a current report of actual expenditures against the budget at each meeting
To be familiar with local ordinances, state statutes and national laws that affect the library	To know local, state, and national laws and to actively support library legislation in the state and nation
To approve the library's materials' selection policy that is used by the staff to select materials for the library	To select and order all books and other library materials according to board policy
To faithfully attend and be prepared for all board meetings and support majority decisions reached by the board, in order to ensure good library services for the community	To attend all board meetings and to serve as secretary of the board if required
To be familiar with the services of regional library systems and how they help the library fulfill its mission	To make full use of the regional library system services
To be familiar with the services of the Nebraska Library Commission and how it helps the library fulfill its mission	To make use of the services and consultants of the Nebraska Library Commission
To present the annual report to the municipality and/or county government, defend the budget before funding entities, and actively represent the library to the general public	To report regularly to the library board, to the officials of local government, and to the general public
To explore ways to improve the library's services, engaging in ongoing strategic planning	To suggest and carry out plans for extending services of the library
To receive regular reports from the library director and other staff, as appropriate, indicating progress toward the library's goals, and recommendations related to future needs of the library	To prepare regular reports detailing current progress and future needs of the library
To participate in local, state and national organizations (as possible), to read library-related publications, to visit other libraries and other trustees in order to keep up with current trends and practices, and to support staff professional involvement	To affiliate with state and national professional organizations and to attend professional meetings and workshops
To maintain status as a certified public library board under the board certification program	To maintain status as a certified public librarian under the librarian certification program

When the board and the library director understand their respective roles, the library and its services are stronger.

How do bylaws help a board operate more effectively?

A library board can run most effectively if it has bylaws for its own operation and if it conducts successful board meetings. These bylaws must be consistent with local ordinances and state statutes pertinent to the library. Bylaws provide an opportunity for a library board to establish rules and routines for governing its actions and carrying out its responsibilities. Bylaws usually include:

- Selection, appointment, term length, number and composition of board, as determined by local ordinance establishing the library.
- Place, time and responsibility for regular meeting.
- Procedures for calling special meetings.
- Attendance requirements.
- Definition and requirements of a quorum.
- Parliamentary rules to be followed.
- Duties of individual board members.
- Duties of officers.
- Appointment and duties of standing committees.
- Provisions for special committees.
- Relationship with the library director.
- Limitations on board members.
- Required reports and yearly timetables.
- Procedures for adopting or amending bylaws.
- Order of business.

The bylaws provide the general structure for the board's work. All board members need to understand the specific roles, assignments and the expectations for all officers and committees as outlined in board's bylaws.

Meetings of the library board

Regular meetings should be held to conduct board business effectively. Although library board members serve without pay, they are expected to give time and effort to their responsibilities. The knowledge and ability of individual members come together in the regular meetings of the board, where all members are equal and only the board as a whole can make a decision.

Most library boards schedule monthly regular meetings at times and places planned and announced well in advance. Regular and special meetings are subject to the requirements of the state Open Meetings Law.

An agenda should be prepared jointly by the chairperson and the library director with input from other board members and staff. It is good practice to ask at each board meeting what items members may wish to have placed on the next agenda. The agenda items should be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting. Here is a list of basic agenda items based on Robert's Rules of Order:

- Roll call.
- Reading previous minutes and statistical reports.
- Correspondence and communication.
- Report of the librarian.
- Reports of any standing committees.
- Reports of special committees.
- Old (unfinished) business.
- New business.
- Adjournment.

Refer to the end of the chapter for a sample agenda.

The library board may wish to acquire an abbreviated publication related to meeting procedures such as, *Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance* by O. Garfield Jones, which is based on Robert's Rules of Order. Various Internet resources are referred to at the end of the chapter.

What are some ideas for library board member orientation?

The library board should have a written orientation plan in place that can be used when a new person joins the board. The orientation will be the joint responsibility of the library director and the chairperson of the board, although all board members may want to participate, as this is a good time to review the board's functions.

Board members need to understand that they are the link between the community and the library. They are responsible for developing and supporting the library's mission; understanding the laws that govern libraries; overseeing services and defining policy; planning for the future of the library; hiring and evaluating the library director; promoting the library and its programs; meeting certification/ accreditation standards; and securing and overseeing financial resources.

Orientation Activities:

- Contact new member to welcome and schedule orientation.
- Provide tour of library facility and introduction to library staff.
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of the board, and of the director and staff.
- Review the library history, mission and goals; bylaws; policies; and budget.
- Introduce new member to the board and review trustee responsibilities.

Orientation Materials:

- Library mission statement
- Directory of board members and staff
- Calendar of board meetings
- *Nebraska Library Board Manual* (including library laws)
- Library policy manual
- Current budget
- Recent annual and monthly reports, and board meeting minutes
- Statistical data about the community and the library*
- Information about the state library and library systems
- Contact information for library and trustee organizations

* Statistical data might include size of collection, size of library, population served, circulation, budget, hours, current services and programs.

The library director may want to develop a PowerPoint or other media presentation that can provide an overview of the library and the basic functions of the board. This would provide consistent and concise information, without repeated preparation.

Another way to learn about the library may be to volunteer in the library. While not the same as working in the library, this activity may lend insight into the board's understanding of the library's services and how they are delivered.

What makes a board meeting successful?

In order to encourage attendance, every meeting should be meaningful. They should be as productive as possible and deal only with appropriate issues. Here are some suggestions:

- Plan meetings on a regular schedule as listed in your bylaws. Select specific dates, times, and places six to twelve months in advance. Special meetings may be called if needed.
- Inform the chairperson when you are unable to attend and give reason.
- Follow procedures for conducting business meetings as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order. If this seems too formal, the chairperson should devise a specific order of business that maintains an orderly flow for the meetings.
- Hold working board sessions and committee meetings prior to the formal board meeting where decisions are made. This saves time and provides an opportunity for careful study of issues.
- Committees issue recommendations to the board but do not make the decisions. Written committee reports distributed before the board meetings are the most effective.
- Prepare the agenda in advance. Allow adequate time for the items listed, and establish clear time limits.
- Publish or post public notice of meetings.
- Mail or distribute the agenda, related reports, statistics, etc. at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.

- Begin meetings on time with a roll call.
- Introduce any visitors and/or new board members.
- Approve minutes of the previous meeting.
- Keep an archival file of board minutes in the library. Individual board members should retain current minutes in their trustee notebooks.

Successful meetings depend on advance preparation. The agenda establishes the order of the meeting. The entire board meets to transact its business in public as a corporate body. The library board should review its ground rules annually.

What rules govern public meetings?

Library board meetings must be open to the public and news media. The community "owns" the library, and trustees govern on behalf of the citizens. Public awareness of the library's operation, its plans and problems can be very beneficial. Minutes for all meetings must be in writing and open for public inspection.

Announcement of the meeting and the basic agenda could be placed in the local newspaper. A copy of the meeting notice should be posted at the library or wherever the meeting will be held.

The board needs to make available at the meeting at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Law. This copy needs to be posted in the meeting room of the location of the meeting so that it is accessible to the public. The chair of the board also needs to inform the public about the location of the posted information about the Law.

If the board enters into an executive or closed session, no formal action can be taken in that session. **All decisions must be formally adopted in an open board meeting in order to be legally binding.** Notification of closed sessions needs to be posted just as the regular agenda is posted.

There are reasons to have closed sessions. When voting to go into closed session, the motion should identify the subject matter and the specific reason. The board might go into closed session as necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the protection of the reputation of an individual.

Library staff members also should be invited to attend meetings to observe and/or report. The communication between the board and staff members can reward the library with an increased level of cooperation and understanding.

See sections 84-1407 through 84-1414 of the Nebraska state statutes for additional information on public meetings.

How does a public library board evaluate its progress?

Evaluation is a board responsibility inherent in all trustee duties. Evaluation is the continuous process of looking at all phases of library operation to assure the machinery is running well. Most boards lack a formal method of systematic evaluation. They tend to evaluate by instinct, public outcry, staff discontent,

building conditions, or the librarian's recommendation. In effect, a decision is made to react, rectify, change, shift, retract, hire, etc. But boards can be more decisive if their decision-making is based upon systematic annual evaluations as well as upon continuous informal monitoring of their library's progress.

Areas for annual evaluation can include:

- Overall progress of the library's program and planning.
- Self-evaluation of the board's effectiveness (individual trustee and the board as a whole).
- Performance of the director.

How does the public library board measure up?

Since the library board is vital to the success of its public library, its performance should be part of the total evaluation. Boards should be willing to look at their own operation and ask these questions (Refer to the end of the chapter for a sample evaluation.):

- Does the board operate under a written set of bylaws and follow the laws that govern board operations?
- Is there an effective committee structure that involves all members in board work?
- Are board meetings run in a businesslike manner with a minimum amount of time devoted to unimportant matters?
- Does the board meet monthly at a regular time with an agenda and relevant documents distributed in advance?
- Are minutes compiled and mailed to members following the meetings?
- Does the library director attend board meetings and committee meetings?
- Is there a training or orientation program for new trustees, jointly conducted by a senior trustee and the library director?
- Is a local library board member manual maintained to supplement the state manual?
- Does the board work closely with municipal governing agents who appoint trustees? Are qualifications and duties clearly stated? Are terms of appointment limited? Does the board represent the whole community?
- Do board members and does each library maintain an up-to-date policy manual?
- Has the board adopted a written statement of goals and objectives which serves as the basis for services and activities?
- Is there a step-by-step plan for the future growth and development of the library?
- Does the board work systematically to assure adequate current and future library funding?
- Does the board encourage and fund member and staff attendance at local, state and national library meetings?
- Is there good communication between the library director and the board, between the president and the members, between the board and related public groups, and among various board members?

Additional Resources:

Agenda (Sample):

Vinnyville Public Library Board

AGENDA

June 6, 2xxx—6:30 PM MT

Call to Order

Approval of Agenda

Opportunity for Comments from the Public

Approval of Minutes from May 2, 2xxx

Reports of Officers and Board Committees

Monthly Report from Library Director

Unfinished Business:

****Director Performance Evaluation**

New Business:

**Request from Citizen to Remove a Certain Title from the Collection
Library Summer Picnic as proposed by Friends of Vinnyville Public Library**

**** Vinnyville Public Library Board reserves the right to go into executive session as necessary for the protection of public interest or for the protection of the reputation of an individual.**

Evaluation:

Self-Evaluation for Library Board Members

Board members may find this example a useful means of evaluation. Each board member who uses this tool or a similar one for self-evaluation can receive continuing education credits as part of the Nebraska Library Commission Board Certification program. Contact the Continuing Education Coordinator from the Nebraska Library Commission for more details.

1. Our board members fulfill an important role in the organization; they represent a high degree of competence and experience and are in position to influence others in the community.

☐ all do ☐ most do ☐ half do ☐ few do ☐ none does

2. Our board as a whole represents a cross section of our community.

☐ completely ☐ mostly ☐ half ☐ only small
portion ☐ not at all

3. Our board members brief themselves on the organization's problems and needs; know the organization's mission, history, philosophy and plans; keep abreast of trends which affect our organization; understand the role of a board member.

☐ all do ☐ most do ☐ half do ☐ few do ☐ none does

4. Our board members prepare themselves for meetings; study and understand reports and background materials; ask probing and insightful questions at meetings; focus on problems; demand and get necessary information for major decisions.

☐ always ☐ usually ☐ sometimes ☐ occasionally ☐ never

5. Our board members are active spokespersons for our organization and are using their influence with others who help our library.

☐ always ☐ usually ☐ sometimes ☐ occasionally ☐ never

6. Our board members assist with fund raising efforts of the library, help with the development program and promote the library's budget.

☐ all do ☐ most do ☐ half do ☐ few do ☐ none does

7. Our board members serve on one or more important board committees and are active in committee assignments, carrying out duties and making useful contributions of ideas and information.

☐ all do ☐ most do ☐ half do ☐ few do ☐ none does

8. Our board members attend board meetings regularly and faithfully.

☐ all do ☐ most do ☐ half do ☐ few do ☐ none does

9. The mission and goals of the library are:

☐ very clear ☐ clear ☐ somewhat clear ☐ not clear

10. The role of the board is:

☐ very clear ☐ clear ☐ somewhat clear ☐ not clear

11. The board's problem-solving abilities are:

☐ very good ☐ good ☐ somewhat good ☐ not good

12. Conflict on the board is managed:

☐ very productively ☐ productively ☐ somewhat productively ☐ not productively

13. The board's decision-making processes (taking into account procedures, the level of information and the people involved) are:

☐ very effective ☐ somewhat effective ☐ not effective

14. The quality of communication among board members is:

☐ very good ☐ good ☐ somewhat good ☐ not good

15. The quality of communication between the staff and the board is:

☐ very good ☐ good ☐ somewhat good ☐ not good

16. **The level of effectiveness of the board's committees and the committee structure is:**

☐ very effective ☐ effective ☐ somewhat effective ☐ not effective

17. **I recommend individuals for service on the library board:**

☐ very often ☐ sometimes ☐ almost never ☐ never

18. **I find serving on the library board to be a satisfying and rewarding experience:**

☐ completely ☐ almost completely ☐ very little ☐ not at all

Meetings: Websites:

- **The Official Robert's Rules Of Order Web Site**
<http://www.robertsrules.com/>
- **Parliamentary Procedure by John A. Cagle**
<http://www.csufresno.edu/comm/cagle-p3.htm>
- **Parliamentary Procedures at a Glance**
<http://www.csuchico.edu/sac/parliament.html>

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 1: Selection, Organization, Orientation and Evaluation of Library Boards



- **How are library board members selected for our library?**
- **How do the responsibilities of the board differ from the responsibilities of the library director?**
- **We have a new board member starting next month. What should we include in the orientation?**
- **Should we be evaluating ourselves? And if so, how?**

Library boards have been established to assist with a number of important responsibilities in a public library including: approving the budget, hiring and evaluating the director, planning, advocating for the library and its services, and policymaking. But how do individuals become contributors to community service in this way? And how can they be effective?

State and local laws help to determine how public library boards are established. The number of board members, selection process, and other related procedures are also guided by this legal foundation. So it is very important to be aware of the rules and regulations that guide the establishment and appointment of board members.

There are a number of points to consider in order for individual board members and the board as a whole to be effective for the library and the community:

- **Individual strengths, talents, and skills of board members to be used for the common good.** It is very beneficial to have community members that can contribute expert knowledge or expertise in a professional or technical discipline. It's also good to have board members with well-established connections to the community, and individuals who are new community members to bring a fresh perspective.
- **Basic understanding of the responsibilities of the board and how these responsibilities differ from that of the library director.** This understanding can help bring a teamwork type atmosphere to the organization. Each party helps to complement the other.
- **The establishment of bylaws to help guide the operation of the board.** Bylaws need to be consistent with the local and state laws.
- **The development of an orientation process for newly selected board members.** This orientation can be provided as a cooperative effort between the library director and chair of the board.
- **The practice of holding productive board meetings that also meet the legal requirements.** Since library board meetings must be open to the public, they have to adhere to state laws pertaining to public meetings.
- **The ability to use methods and/or tools on a regular basis for evaluating the effectiveness of individual board members and the group as a whole.**

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******Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are questions about selection, organization, orientation and evaluation of library boards to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- We are “running out” of community members to nominate for the library board. What should we be looking for in a future board member? How should we recruit?
- We will be discussing the director’s evaluation at our next board meeting. What do we have to consider in relation to the laws relating on public meetings?
- We haven’t reviewed our bylaws in over 10 years. How should we go about the review process?
- I remember when I came on the board there wasn’t any formal training process for me. And I don’t think we have done anything since. How shall we develop an orientation process so that both the director and the chairperson of the board are involved?

Where can we look for additional information related to Selection, Organization, Orientation and Evaluation of Library Boards?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *The Library Trustee: a Practical Guidebook*
- *The Library Trustee and the Public Librarian: Partners in Service*
- *Library Trustee Guidelines*
- *A Noble Calling: the Roles and Responsibilities of Library Trustees* (video)
- *Recruitment and Orientation of Library Trustees* (video)
- *The Successful Library Trustee Handbook*
- *The Trustee of a Small Public Library*

Websites:

- “Nebraska Laws Pertaining to Libraries & Library Operations”
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/liblaws>
- “Residency Requirement for Nebraska Public Library Boards”
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/trustees/residency.html>

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

EVALUATION FORM
Chapter 1: Selection, Organization, Orientation, and Evaluation
of Library Boards



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name_____

Public Library_____

1. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.

2. What other topics/information concerning **“Selection, Organization, Orientation, and Evaluation of Library Boards”** would you like to see addressed in this chapter?

3. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?

4. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?

5. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:

6. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No ___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?

7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:

8. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.



THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

CHAPTER 2

Public Libraries, Trustees and the Law

This chapter offers information on the legal establishment of public libraries in Nebraska. It also alerts board members to some common legal issues that occur in libraries and summarizes some sections of the state statutes with which trustees should be familiar. It does not, however, offer legal advice. **Board members with specific legal questions should contact the library's attorney.**

Section I

Public Libraries and the Law

How have public libraries been founded?

The earliest public libraries in Nebraska were established as privately-funded service activities, often founded as community projects by local Women's Clubs. Later, those libraries were legally established as publicly-operated and funded libraries. Eventually, public libraries were often established as tax-supported governmental services.

What is a public library's legal basis?

Local government units (villages, cities, townships and counties) derive their legal authority from the Nebraska Constitution and Statutes. Public libraries are established and governed according to those statutes, and according to the local ordinances approved by the local governing bodies within their statutory authority. Every Nebraska public library is part of a local government unit. Legislation regarding public libraries in Nebraska is permissive. That is, every local government unit has the authority to either establish, or not establish, a public library.

How is a public library legally established?

A city council, village board of trustees or the electors of a township may establish a public library by resolution or by ordinance. A county board also may establish a county library, provided that the voters of the county have approved such action at a general election.

How can public libraries cooperate with community entities to provide library services?

The Interlocal Cooperation Act (sections 13-801 through 13-807 of the *Nebraska Revised State Statutes*) permits all Nebraska local government subdivisions to provide any services jointly which they are legally authorized to provide alone. In other words, all villages, cities, townships and/or counties may cooperate to provide public library services in any combination.

In addition, public libraries also are empowered to contract for the provision of library services to school districts (Chapter 51, Section 208, *Nebraska Revised State Statutes*). (See also appropriate state statutes related to the Joint Public Agency Act for other methods for cooperation.) **For more information on this subject, please refer to the current version of the statutes of Nebraska.**

Section II

Trustee and the Law

All public library trustees should recognize and accept their legal position as governing agencies of their libraries. (See also chapter 12 concerning advisory boards for more information.) The public library board should be aware of general legal requirements in order to carry out duties required by law as stated in Nebraska State Statutes.

What are the legal responsibilities and liabilities of the trustee?

A trustee of a public library is a public officer who holds the public trust in regard to the operation of the library. The citizens and taxpayers of the government unit are the recipients of that trust. The law imposes high standards. Managing funds is one of the highest legal obligations of a board, particularly when the funds are from taxes.

Other duties include obeying the laws governing libraries, accepting the duties and responsibilities of the office, and diligence in serving as a trustee.

How can trustees fulfill their duties in a responsible manner?

This manual is not intended to give legal advice for any particular circumstance. It is intended to alert boards of trustees about some sound management techniques to lessen their liability.

- Be active and encourage all other trustees to be active by attending meetings, studying, questioning, voting on all issues, monitoring progress, and maintaining active committees.
- Recommend that library board members serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- Have a policy in place that provides guidelines for attendance and for fulfilling duties.
- Read the minutes. Corrections are made by amending the minutes before final acceptance of minutes is voted upon.
- Be sure the minutes of each meeting are maintained and that each vote is properly recorded.
- Vote against proposed actions if you feel you have insufficient information on which to base an opinion. If you abstain until more information is provided, follow up on the issue and let the record show your position.
- Eliminate any conflicts of interest on a board. A generally accepted rule of thumb is that a trustee or his/her immediate family may not receive any tangible or intangible gain in dealing with the library. In case a relative is a potential recipient of library funds, the affected trustee should abstain from any discussion or vote.
- If conflicts are occurring, put your concerns in writing. This protects you.

Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees

- Trustees in the capacity of trust upon them, shall observe ethical standards with absolute truth, integrity and honor.
- Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues or the situation.
- It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever the appearance or a conflict of interest exists.
- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the board even if they personally disagree.
- A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.
- Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.
- Trustees who accept library board responsibilities are expected to perform all of the functions of library trustees.

Directors of the Public Library Association, July 1985. Amended by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1988. Approval of the amendment by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, January 1989.

Even if you follow through on these recommendations and act in good faith, boards can still be sued. To protect the board, it is advised by American Library Association (ALA) that you should try to find insurance protection. There is no set standard or accepted amount for this insurance. There are some policies designed specifically for public officials. Consult with your city for information on liability and/or errors and omissions policies, which can be extended to library board members.

Laws allowing for cooperation among different local governments:

- 13-801 through 13-807
- 13-2501 through 13-2550
- 51-217 (schools and public libraries)
- 72-2301 through 72-2308 (for technology)

Laws allowing for various sources of funds:

- 14-501 and 14-526
- 17-967 through 17-969
- 19-1301 and 19-1302

Laws on establishing libraries:

- 15-230
- 16-251

Laws defining obscenity; certain library exceptions:

- 28-807 through 28-815

Primary sections of laws related to public libraries:

- 51-201 (establishment; various ways of organizing)
- 51-202 through 51-211 and 51-213 (library boards – selection, powers, library buildings, annual report)
- 51-214 through 51-218 (real estate, donations, tax exemption, etc.)
- 81.5,147 through 81.5,150 (building accessibility)

Public Records Law:

- 84-712.05 (library records)

Open Meetings Law:

- 84-1407 through 84-1414

For more information, contact the Nebraska Library Commission Library Development Office.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 2: Public Libraries, Trustees and the Law



- What is the legal basis for establishing public libraries in Nebraska, and how does this relate to my local village, city or county ordinances?
- We seem to have some difference of opinion on what we as members of the library board are responsible for, and what city officials are responsible for. How do we go about trying to resolve this?
- What provisions of the state's Open Meetings Law do we have to be mindful of for board meetings and board actions?
- We have some board members who rarely attend meetings, and when they do, they are not conversant with what the library and board are doing. What options do we have to possibly replace them?

This is only a small sample of possible situations and questions that may arise as a public library board goes about the business of governing or advising the local public library. Library board members must realize that at times there may be a need to seek legal counsel to help answer some of the questions that arise. At other times they may need to seek other experts to help them make informed decisions. Whatever the case, the board must make an effort to understand the basis of its decisions if it is to provide adequate service to its community.

Of course not all situations require consulting with an outside expert. Sometimes library board members themselves bring certain skills to the table; at other times library staff does also. Staff also has the ability to provide research for the board to help them make informed decisions. Following are some approaches a board may want to consider to ensure that it is operating in a manner consistent with state laws, local ordinances and community expectations:

- **Become familiar with Chapter 51 of the state statutes.** Board members are not expected to act as attorneys, but having at least some knowledge of the basis for public libraries and boards can be handy in many situations such as: budgeting, personnel issues, and long-range planning.
- **Know what your community ordinances say about the library board:** How is the board selected? How long are the terms of office? What else do those ordinances say about board responsibilities?
- **Understand both the powers the board has, and the responsibilities it has to use those powers appropriately.** This understanding should be developed in conjunction with a good working relationship with other local elected and appointed officials.
- **Develop library policies that are consistent with good library practice and in keeping with pertinent laws and ordinances.**
- **Write board bylaws and procedures that are concise and that facilitate board activities.** Make certain that all board members are familiar with these and follow them (e.g., the by-laws should spell out how many meetings a board member may miss before a resignation is requested.)
- **Be familiar with the Public Library Association's "Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees,"** which appears in this chapter of the manual.

- **Consider liability insurance protection for at least the elected officers of your board.** Your local government will be able to tell you if it carries such insurance and if the library board may participate.

******Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are questions about public libraries, trustees, and the law to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- What if my local ordinances about the library and the board seem to contradict what state laws say? How do we go about resolving the situation?
- A smaller town outside ours is interested in receiving library services from our library; our city officials are reluctant for us to do this because that town is outside our taxing area. How do we go about doing that?
- In our town, everyone knows everybody else. It appears inevitable that we are going to have “conflicts of interest” at times on our library board. How do we plan for or deal with this possibility?

Where can we look for additional information related to Public Libraries, Trustees and the Law?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *Avoiding Liability Risk: An Attorney’s Advice to Library Trustees and Others*
- *Privacy in the 21st Century: Issues for Public, School, and Academic Libraries*
- *The Public Library Manager’s Forms, Policies, and Procedures Handbook*
- *The Successful Library Trustee Handbook*

Websites:

- **Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA), a division of American Library Association**
<http://www.ala.org/alta/>
- **American Library Association (ALA)**
<http://www.ala.org/>
- **“Nebraska Laws Pertaining to Libraries & Library Operations”**
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/liblaws/>
- **“Nebraska Libraries on the Internet” – some libraries post their policies on their websites**
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libraries/nelib.asp>
- **“Residency Requirement for Nebraska Public Library Boards”**
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/trustees/residency.html>

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

EVALUATION FORM
Chapter 2: Public Libraries, Trustees, and the Law



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name_____

Public Library_____

1. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.

2. What other topics/information concerning **“Public Libraries, Trustees, and the Law”** would you like to see addressed in this chapter?

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THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

CHAPTER 3

Policies



Library policies are essential for every library board and for every library regardless of size or number of library staff. Policy affects nearly everything a library board does. Library policy should be carefully written since it serves as the blueprint for library operations. Policymaking is an administrative library board's most important function.

What are library policies?

Policies are broadly stated guidelines for how the library operates. They must be approved by the board. Policies are not detailed courses of action; rather they reflect the philosophy that supports the actions of the staff. Policies provide the basis for **procedures**. The procedures, or activities needed to carry out the policies, will be developed by library staff and do not require board approval.

Policies should be written in a way that is clear and easily understood, using simple and concise language. They should be made readily available to the public. Policies should reflect the priorities of the library and the expectations of the community. Library boards exist to represent the people. Of all board decisions, library policy decisions generally have the most frequent impact on individuals throughout the community. Valid policies conform to current laws, are reasonable, are non-discriminatory, and can be enforced. Policies should be reviewed by legal counsel to ensure that they do not conflict with local, state or federal laws or regulations.

Why does the library have policies?

Policies guide the library director and staff in the implementation of board judgments and provide direction and consistency in day-to-day service to the community. Policies reduce uninformed decision-making and crisis responses to problem situations. Policies help assure the public that library services will be provided in a fair and equitable manner. They protect the rights of patrons and staff. They provide the information that staff members need to do their job effectively. Policies reflect the library's mission. Some policies are required for library accreditation. Check the current guidelines at: <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/LibAccred/Guidelines.pdf>

Policy Considerations:

- What policies does the library have, especially on issues such as:
 - Intellectual freedom.
 - Materials selection.
 - Requests from the public for reconsideration of library materials.
 - Patron behavior.
 - Internet use.
 - Confidentiality of patron records.
 - Use of library facilities.

- What policies does the library need that it doesn't have now?
- How do board members develop and write policy?
- How often do board members review library policies and revise them if needed?
- How does the library board make its policies known to the public?

How do board members develop a policy manual?

Library policy development requires time and concentration to analyze the need for a policy, the possible options and wording of the proposed policy, and possible ramifications if the policy is adopted. Experience shows that hastily-developed policies, which are not clearly thought through by the board, are the most likely to result in misunderstandings and problems. The library board should not wait until the need for a policy creates pressure to act quickly. Develop a policy calmly when there is a predictable probability that the library needs one in a specific area.

Here are some steps to follow:

- Write a statement of the condition that requires the policy.
- Describe how the proposed policy will contribute to the library's goals and mesh with the library's mission.
- Identify present policies that will be affected by the new policy.
- Analyze short- and long-term effects; positive and negative side effects; estimated cost in dollars, time, staff; legal ramifications.
- Prepare the exact wording of the proposed policy; it should answer "why" the library has the policy.
- Check to be sure that the policy conforms to local, state and federal laws.
- Allow opportunities for public input.

After all library board members have reviewed and discussed the policy statement, a vote is taken. If approved, a notation should be made on the policy to show the date of approval, effective date and in the future, date reviewed and date revised. The library board and library staff will observe the effect of the new policy, alert for unanticipated results that might require policy modification. No policy is cast in stone. Because conditions, people and needs change, so do policies. The board should plan a regular, periodic review of all policies, revising, adding and deleting as needed.

The policy manual can be contained in a loose leaf binder to accommodate changes. Contents should be categorized and numbered for easy reference. Trustees and staff must be familiar with policies in order to support and enforce them. Policies also must be accessible to the public, the media and local officials.

For assistance in developing policies, or additional information and policy samples, contact your regional library system administrator or the Nebraska Library Commission.

What should be included in library policies?

Libraries are encouraged to have a policy manual which begins with general information including the history of the library, the mission or purpose of the library and the goals of the library. This may be followed with the bylaws that govern the basic operations of the board, such as frequency of meetings, length of terms, officers, duties and powers, etc.

The kinds of specific policies are as varied as the many different aspects of library service. Every phase of library operation should be broadly covered by a policy and implemented through library procedures. Your local needs will determine the content of your policy manual. Samples of library policies are available at your library system office, in various publications and on library websites. See the end of this chapter for a more complete list of policies and sources of sample policies.

Some policies deal with the relationship of the library to its users, the community, the local government, other libraries, volunteers, Friends group, etc. Here are a few examples of areas covered by this type of policy:

- Public services.
- Circulation and use of materials.
- Availability and use of facilities.
- Intellectual freedom.
- Privacy.

Other policies deal with administrative practices. They may include, but are not limited to, areas such as these:

- Finance and investing / purchasing.
- Selection of materials / collection development.
- Gifts / donations.
- Personnel / evaluation.
- Emergencies / disasters.

Common Policy Topics

Circulation:

- Residency requirements
- Borrowing privileges
- Loan period and renewals
- Overdue material, fees, and fines
- Lost and damaged material
- Reserving material

Public Services:

- Patron rights
- Staff rights
- Patron behavior
- Unattended children
- Complaints

- Reference service
- Confidentiality of patron records
- Internet use

Administrative:

- Volunteers
- Friends of the Library
- Personnel
- Emergency and safety
- Budget and finance
- Continuing education and professional organizations
- Gifts, memorials, and donations
- Collection development and evaluation
- Weeding
- Challenges to material
- Exhibits, displays and bulletin boards
- Meeting rooms

Library Board:

- Bylaws
- Board duties
- Board appointments
- Committees
- Meetings
- Conflicts of interest

Additional Resources: Sample Policies: Websites

To locate samples of specific policies from public libraries, do an Internet search for “public library policies.” Or if you need a policy for a specific area, use that in your search; for example “library internet policy” or “public library confidentiality policy.”

- **AcqWeb’s Directory of Policies**
http://acqweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/cd_policy.html
- **State Library of Ohio Library Policy Resource page**
<http://winslo.state.oh.us/publib/policies.html>
- **Wisconsin Public Libraries Policy Resource page**
<http://www.owlsweb.info/l4l/policies.asp>

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 3: Policies



- What are library policies and why does the library have them?
- How is a policy manual developed?
- What are some basic policies that all libraries need?
- Where can library board members get help writing policies?

Policymaking is one of the most important functions of a library board because it directs how the library operates. The policies reflect the philosophy of service that the library has. All libraries need policies.

- **A library policy is a statement that explains the library's philosophy about a specific aspect of library service.** For example, a policy on "patron behavior" would explain the type of environment that the library offers and why certain types of activities (such as smoking, talking on a cell phone, using abusive language) are not acceptable. The policy often contains a "regulation" statement that describes the consequence for those who violate the policy: "those who exhibit inappropriate behaviors will be told about the policy and asked to stop; if they do not stop, they will be asked to leave the library." The library board must formally approve each policy.
- **The library needs policies so that the staff knows how to run the library, and the public knows what the rules are about using the library.** Both staff and library users know that they are doing the right thing as long as they follow policies. It's important to review policies regularly to be sure they still match current expectations and deal with new situations that may have developed. Policies should be revised as needed.
- **The actual procedures that the library staff follows to carry out the policy can be developed by the staff and don't need approval from the library board.** This might involve the use of forms, the steps involved in carrying out a task, etc.
- **A policy manual contains all the library policies, organized by type of policy.** For example, there may be a section of policies about checking out materials (circulation), another about how the staff assures equal treatment of all patrons (public services), and one about how the staff decides what books to buy (collection development). There are some policies that all libraries need, but some policies will only be necessary if a situation pertains to that library (such as for bookmobile services).
- **If a policy deals with anything that might conflict with a law (such as carrying concealed weapons), give a copy to a legal counsel to review before approving it.**
- **If your library is accredited, or wants to become accredited, certain basic policies must be in place, such as circulation, collection development, Internet use, confidentiality of patron records, finance, personnel, emergency and safety.**
- **Since all libraries have policies, the board may wish to look at policies from other libraries and adapt them to fit the library's needs.** Check out these places for sample policies: your regional library system office, the Nebraska Library Commission and the Internet.

****** Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are some questions about policies to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- Do we have a policy manual? Are we reviewing our policies on a regular schedule? If not, how can we make this a part of our board activities?
- Do we have the policies that are required for library accreditation? If not, how will we get samples of these policies so that we can write our own?
- What is the last policy that the library board approved? What policies do we need to develop in order to support the staff and provide the best service to patrons?

Where can we look for additional information related to Policies?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *Alabama Public Library Trustee Manual*
- *Be Prepared: Security at Your Library* (video)
- *Building Use Policies*
- *Creating Policies for Results*
- *Developing Computer and Internet Policies for Public Libraries*
- *Excess Access: Pornography, Children, and the American Library Assn.* (video)
- *Kids Welcome Here! : Writing Public Library Policies that Promote Use by Young People*
- *Library Security and Safety Handbook: Prevention, Policies, and Procedures*
- *Managing Children's Services in the Public Library*
- *Neal-Schumann Internet Policy Handbook for Libraries*
- *PLA Handbook for Writers of Public Library Policies*
- *Public Library Manager's Forms, Policies, and Procedures Manual with CD-ROM*
- *Web Filtering: Policies, Software, Staff Training and CIPA*

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

EVALUATION FORM

Chapter 3: Policies



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name _____

Public Library _____

7. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.
8. What other topics/information concerning **“Policies”** would you like to see addressed in this chapter?
9. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?
10. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?
11. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:
12. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No ___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?
7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:
13. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

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THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

CHAPTER 4

Intellectual Freedom

What is Intellectual Freedom?

Intellectual Freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It is a fundamental concept on which libraries are built. It must be addressed in policies in order to support the library's position as a defender of the rights of its community members as contained in the First Amendment. Library trustees have a responsibility to preserve intellectual freedom rights in the local public library. This includes a citizen's right to his/her own beliefs and expressions, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to access a wide spectrum of ideas and information.

How is Intellectual Freedom addressed in a library?

Library board members have an obligation to ensure that the library provides its users with a variety of materials representing a continuum of viewpoints, regardless of pressure brought by special interest groups. They must maintain an open, non-judgmental institution where individuals can pursue their interests and gain an understanding of diverse opinions. The test of a trustee's commitment to support freedom of access comes when faced with group pressure, publicity and community furor over material that is not in accord with the trustee's personal beliefs.

To prevent attempts at censorship, trustees must have policies and procedures in place, plus an active commitment to the ideas expressed in the "The Library Bill of Rights," the "Freedom to Read" and "Freedom to View" statements created by the American Library Association (see links to these documents at the end of this chapter). Policies on the selection of materials and development of the collection, plus a procedure for dealing with citizen complaints, will allow the library to be open to questions and concerns without accommodating censorship.

Here are some steps to take to prepare the board to defend Intellectual Freedom:

- Establish a written materials selection / collection development policy.
- Create a clearly-outlined method for handling complaints.
- Provide training for trustees and staff.
- Maintain active communication with civic, religious, educational and political groups in the community.
- Participate in presentations explaining the library's selection principles.
- Be aware of legislation relating to intellectual freedom.
- Develop relationships with the media, who are also defenders of the freedom to read.

A sample "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" is shown at the end of this chapter along with other Internet resources available from the American Library Association and Nebraska Library Commission.

Additional Resources :

Intellectual Freedom Reconsideration Form

Sample “Citizen’s Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials” form based on the American Library Association example. *[This is where you identify who in your own structure, has authorized use of this form—Director, Library Board—and to whom to return the form.]*

Example: The public library board of Vinnyville Public Library has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library resources to the library director and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of public library resources, please return the completed form to the Public Library Director, Vinnyville, NE.

Name _____

Date _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone _(____)_____

Do you represent self? ____ Organization? ____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

____ Book ____ Textbook ____ Video ____ Display

____ Magazine ____ Library Program ____ Audio Recording

____ Newspaper ____ Electronic information/network (please specify)

____ Other _____

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource?

4. What concerns you about the resource? (use other side or additional pages if necessary)

5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

Websites:

- **Access to Electronic Information: A Nebraska Library Commission Interpretation**
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/freedom/elecaccess.html>
- **The Freedom to Read Statement**
<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/firstatement/freedomreadstatement.htm>
- **The Freedom to View Statement**
<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/ftvstatement/freedomviewstatement.htm>
- **Intellectual Freedom Handbook from Nebraska Library Association (NLA) and Nebraska Library Commission**
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/freedom/intellectfree.html>
- **Library Bill of Rights**
<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/statementsif/librarybillrights.htm>

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 4: Intellectual Freedom



- What does the concept of Intellectual Freedom have to do with libraries?
- How does the First Amendment relate to the mission of the public library?
- What “library documents” need to be part of our library’s policies?
- Why do we need a procedure for handling complaints about materials?

The original purpose of establishing public libraries was to make knowledge available to all people so that our country would have educated citizens – the foundation of a democracy. Although libraries are constantly changing, that principle continues to be at the heart of the public library mission.

- **Intellectual Freedom means that a person has a right to explore information without restrictions.** Because of this, the library has an obligation to provide a collection of materials that represents all points of view. This allows anyone free access to explore all sides, and provides a way for all ideas to be accessed.
- **Among other things, the First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees the right of free expression and speech.** As difficult as it may be for board members to defend this ideal when people in the community question why the library has a book with sexual or political content that is different from the majority opinion, the library has an obligation to let all sides be available. Our Founding Fathers knew the value of dissent in a free society. One of the purposes of public libraries is to help preserve that freedom.
- **The American Library Association has published several documents over the years that provide a framework for library policies on intellectual freedom.** “The Library Bill of Rights” and the “Freedom to Read/View” statements help us remember the importance of public libraries in a democracy. A key concept is that the materials in a library should not be restricted because of what they contain, who created them or who wants to use them.
- **In order to be responsive to the community, the library board must provide a way for people to express their ideas about materials in the library that they feel may be inappropriate.** The process of openly reviewing citizen concerns can provide a way to reaffirm the library’s position of protecting each person’s freedom to read/use materials of their choice, but not to restrict the freedom of others. A formal procedure reduces the emotions that often accompany a potential conflict in viewpoints, requires the complainant to clarify the concern, and allows the material to be reviewed objectively and publicly. All libraries should have a form that allows patrons to request a review of library materials.

****** Chat for Continuing Education Credits ******

Here are some questions about intellectual freedom to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- What is Intellectual Freedom as it relates to libraries?
- Do we have a copy of the “Freedom to Read” and the “Library Bill of Rights” in our policy manual? If so, read the “Library Bill of Rights” aloud and talk about how it influences the library’s policies. If you don’t have a copy available, go to the American Library Association web site and print it: www.ala.org
- If someone, or a group, in the community says that the library should not have materials about homosexuality (or some other topic that may be controversial in your community) in the library how will the library board respond?
- Look at the sample reconsideration form in this chapter. What you would change to make it work well for your library?

Where can we look for additional information related to Intellectual Freedom?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *Censorship and the American Library*
- *Defending Access with Confidence*
- *Ethics and Librarianship*
- *For Freedom’s Sake* (video)
- *Hit List for Young Adults 2: Frequently Challenged Books*
- *Intellectual Freedom for Children*
- *Intellectual Freedom Manual 2006*
- *Libraries, Access, and Intellectual Freedom*
- *The Limits of Tolerance*
- *Nebraska Intellectual Freedom Handbook*
- *“You are Not Alone!”: Intellectual Freedom Issues, and Library Services to Youth*

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

EVALUATION FORM
Chapter 4: Intellectual Freedom



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name_____

Public Library_____

1. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.

2. What other topics/information concerning “**Intellectual Freedom**” would you like to see addressed in this chapter?

3. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?

4. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?

5. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:

6. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No ___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?

7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:

8. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.

THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

CHAPTER 5

Public Library Accreditation



What is accreditation?

Accreditation guidelines for service were developed for Nebraska public libraries in order to “assist and support improvements in Nebraska public library services.”¹ The purpose of the accreditation process is to establish expectations for governance, services and resources for public libraries. The anticipated outcome is that Nebraska citizens will have access to accurate, quality library and information services from public libraries that meet statewide guidelines.

In 1986-87, a committee produced a document called *Gearing Up for the Twenty-first Century: Guidelines for Excellence*, which represented a consensus of the public library community in Nebraska. Those guidelines are the basis for the Public Library Accreditation and Public Librarian Certification programs. They encouraged local planning to adapt services to local needs and conditions as well as to meet specific quality standards. In 1989, the guidelines were revised and recorded in a document called *Guidelines for Service*, which was published in 1991.

The 1991 *Guidelines for Service* document was revised in 1996. A review committee was formed for this purpose. This committee prepared Basic and Advanced Accreditation Guidelines, which were approved by the Public Library Section of the Nebraska Library Association.

In July of 2002, the Library Commission wrote a long-range plan entitled, [*Making a Difference @ your library™ Nebraska Library Services and Technology Act Plan for Library and Information Services 2003-2007*](#). In that plan, one activity under Goal 2 called for the evaluation of the Public Library Accreditation program to address changing library and information needs. In 2004, the accreditation guidelines were reviewed and revised to address the changing library and information needs. The basic and advanced levels of accreditation were replaced with three different levels: Essential, Enhanced and Excellent.

What is the process to become accredited?

On July 15 of each year, accreditation applications are mailed to unaccredited libraries and libraries scheduled to renew accreditation in that year. Libraries that meet the accreditation requirements will receive a Certificate of Accreditation. Libraries are accredited for a three-year period, with a renewal date of October 1. Approximately one-third of the libraries are scheduled for renewal each year.

¹ *Gearing up for the Twenty-first Century: Guidelines for Excellence*, p.1.

Why should a library be accredited?

Accreditation is one of the eligibility requirements for state aid to public libraries. It is also a prerequisite for all grant programs available through the Nebraska Library Commission, as well as a requirement to apply for other funding such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding.

What are the requirements for accreditation?

The requirements adopted in 2004 have three levels of accreditation – Essential, Enhanced and Excellent. The requirements differ at each level. The topics covered include the following:

- Governance.
- Funding.
- Staff size and educational level.
- Hours.
- Collection size and maintenance.
- Equality of access (age, disability, location).
- Policy requirements.
- Board of trustees' requirements (bylaws, meeting frequency, orientation).
- Program and service requirements.
- Outreach and public relations.
- Minimum space requirements.

Certain guidelines are tied to the most recently-collected annual public library data. For example, guidelines related to funding are adjusted each year in accordance with reported revenue. For Essential Accreditation, libraries must meet at least 65% (per capita or total funding) of the statewide average for libraries with a similar legal service area. For Enhanced Accreditation, libraries must meet at least 85% (per capita or total funding) of the statewide average for libraries with a similar legal service area. For Excellent Accreditation, libraries must meet at least 105% (per capita or total funding) of the statewide average for libraries with a similar legal service area.

Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation

*As approved and adopted by the Nebraska Library Commissioners, May 14, 2004
Revised July 2006*

Introduction

Nebraskans deserve and expect high quality service from their public libraries. The purpose of statewide guidelines is to establish a consistent level of basic library and information service that can be expected to be available in every public library across the state. For many years, the Accreditation Guidelines for Service developed for Nebraska public libraries “have assisted and supported improvements in Nebraska public library services.”² The topics addressed in the accreditation process include governance, services, and resources of public libraries. The anticipated outcome is that Nebraska citizens will have access to accurate, high-quality library and information services from public libraries that meet statewide guidelines.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the accreditation process is to establish expectations for governance, services, and resources for public libraries. The anticipated outcome is that Nebraska citizens will have access to accurate, quality library and information services from public libraries that meet statewide independent guidelines.

The *Guidelines for Accreditation* should serve as a tool for measuring and encouraging growth and development of library and information services offered in Nebraska public libraries. The outcome should be the availability of those services for Nebraska citizens served by accredited libraries. Some guidelines measure traditional output data, and others seek to describe intended outcomes resulting from the use of public library services and programs. The *Guidelines* are intended to apply to all public library outlets, including branches, of all sizes, throughout the state. Certain guidelines are written specifically for libraries based on the size of the population of the library’s Legal Service Area (LSA)³.

There are three phases of Accreditation described in these *Guidelines*: Essential, Enhanced, and Excellent. State aid distribution to public libraries will be made proportionately according to the level of Accreditation achieved for a given time period. Libraries accredited at the Essential Level eligible for a minimum base percentage payment of direct state aid, those at the Enhanced Level eligible for a larger percentage, and those at the Excellent Level eligible for the highest percentage.

Process

Libraries that meet all of the *Guidelines* for a specific level of service are accredited at that level for a three year period, from October 1 through September 30. If during that three year period the Library Commission becomes aware of a substantial change in a library’s situation that affects one or more of the guidelines, or the level of accreditation, the Library Commission can review and either revoke or revise that library’s accreditation standing, or place that library’s accreditation on probation until the deficiency is rectified. A library’s eligibility for grants and/or state aid payments during probation will be determined

² *Gearing up for the twenty-first century: Guidelines for excellence*, p. I.

³ Legal Service Area is based on a library’s funding source and the latest U.S. Census figures, with final determination made by the Library Commission. This figure is available on each library’s Public Library Statistical Survey form.

on a case-by-case basis. Final decisions are the responsibility of the Director of the Nebraska Library Commission.

Accreditation is a pre-requisite for state aid eligibility, and is a requirement for eligibility for all grants administered by the Nebraska Library Commission.

Disclaimer

The *Guidelines for Accreditation of Nebraska Public Libraries* are a work-in-progress. It is anticipated that some of the content may need to be revised. It is often through implementation of guidelines that issues become apparent that necessitate some adjustment and, since the intent is that the process be reasonable and fair, the Library Commission reserves the right to make adjustments as deemed appropriate.

Table of Contents

Essential Level.....	31
Enhanced Level.....	35
Excellent Level.....	38
Guideline Checklist.....	41
Glossary.....	44

Additional Information:

Determining Space Needs – Wisconsin State Library produced a document entitled *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*, which is available online at:

<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/plspace.html>

This document can be adapted to meet individual library planning needs, and help with facilities and materials assessment. Thank you to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Division for Libraries and Technology, for their willingness to share this document.

Essential Level

Indicate with a check mark (✓) if a guideline is met.

Governance, Funding and Administration Guidelines

1. The library is legally established and operates in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.

1. _____

2. The library has a library board that meets at the library at least quarterly, in accordance with the Nebraska open meeting law as described in R.R.S.1999, 84-1412. The board has written bylaws, a copy of which is submitted with this application for Accreditation.

2. _____

3. The library has a written mission statement.

3. _____

4. The library annually submits required statistical data⁴ to the Nebraska Library Commission, either online through a Library Commission-designated product such as Bibliostat™ Collect, or with a printed facsimile of the current online form.

4. _____

5. The library board adopts and periodically reviews policies and procedures based on the assessed needs of the community. Written policies include, but are not limited to, the following services: circulation, collection development, personnel, finance, confidentiality of patron records, Internet use, and emergency and safety issues. Copies of policies are submitted with this application for Accreditation. These policies are available upon request.

5. _____

6. The library is supported on a permanent basis by funds from the city, county and/or other special or endowment funds, or any combination of the foregoing sources. For libraries supported primarily by a permanent endowment, the amount received from the endowment will be construed as local support.

6. _____

7. The library's local government revenue for the most recently reported fiscal year is at least 65% of either the average local revenue or the average local per capita for libraries within the same size category, based on the population of the Legal Service Area. The revenue levels are based on the figures reported annually on the Public Library Statistical Survey. "Local Government Revenue" is the amount reported in the Library Finance section of the Public Library Statistical Survey, under the heading of "Local Government Revenue." Where appropriate, the per capita amounts will be determined separately for separate revenue sources. For libraries supported primarily by a permanent endowment, the amount received from the endowment will be construed as local support.

The figures included are based on 2003/2004 public library statistical data. These figures will be revised based on the most recent statistical data submitted annually by public libraries.

⁴ Responses must be provided for all federal data elements. Non-response answers such as *N/A* are not acceptable.

Legal Service Area	Local Revenue per Capita	Total Local Revenue
Less than 500	\$19.57	\$6,707
500 – 999	\$18.49	\$14,076
1,000 – 1,499	\$21.57	\$25,839
1,500 – 2,499	\$19.49	\$36,431
2,500 – 4,999	\$26.07	\$91,006
5,000 – 9,999	\$23.84	\$175,546
10,000 – 49,999	\$20.28	\$463,352
50,000 and above	\$17.17	\$5,693,325

7. ____

8. The library board is certified through participation in the Nebraska Public Library Board Certification Program.

8. ____

Service and Facilities Guidelines

9. Minimum days and hours of library service are as indicated below, based on the library's Legal Service Area (LSA):

Legal Service Area	Minimum Hours per Week	Minimum Days per Week
Less than 500	10	3
500 – 1,499	15	3
1,500 – 2,499	25	4
2,500 – 4,999	30	5
5,000 – 9,999	48	5
10,000 – 24,999	56	6
25,000 and above	64	6

9. ____

10. The library has a telephone located within the library and listed in a telephone company directory, only under the library's name.

10. ____

11. The library is open for service on evening⁵ or weekend⁶ hours, at least as follows:

Legal Service Area	Evening Hours	Weekend Hours
Less than 500	1	1
500 – 1,499	2	2
1,500 – 2,499	2	2
2,500 – 4,999	2	2
5,000 – 9,999	4	3
10,000 and above	6	5

11. _____

12. The public library makes its basic services available without charge to all residents of all ages, of the political subdivisions which supply its tax support. These basic services include an organized collection of library materials, including fiction and non-fiction, to meet the reference and recreational needs of the community.

12. _____

13. If the library building was constructed, occupied or remodeled since January 26, 1992, it meets the accessibility requirements of the “Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990”. If the building was constructed, occupied and last remodeled prior to January 26, 1992, access to library programs and services for persons with disabilities is provided by meeting the accessibility requirements of the “Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990” or through alternate methods such as bookmobiles, home delivery, staff aides or other methods which make the programs and services of the library readily accessible.

13. _____

Personnel Guidelines

14. The library employs paid staff during all scheduled hours that the library is open to the public.

14. _____

15. The library has a staff person appointed as the director, and all staff are paid in compliance with state and federal statutes.

15. _____

⁵ Evening hours include any hours after 6:00 P.M.

⁶ Weekend hours include any hours on Saturday or Sunday.

16. The library director is currently certified in the Public Librarian Certification Program administered by the Nebraska Library Commission, at the following level:

Legal Service Area	Minimum Certification Level
Less than 500	I
500 – 1,499	I
1,500 – 2,499	I
2,500 – 4,999	II
5,000 – 9,999	III
10,000 and above	V

16. _____

Collection Guidelines

17. The library has an organized collection of printed or other library materials, or a combination thereof.

17. _____

18. The library weeds at least 3% of the collection annually.

18. _____

19. The library annually expends at least 10% of operating expenditures, or expenditures made on the library's behalf, for purchasing library materials, including all formats.

19. _____

20. The library circulates at least 2.0 items per capita annually.

20. _____

21. The library attendance figures equal at least 3.0 per capita annually.

21. _____

22. The library collection includes at least 1.3 items per capita, or a total of 10,000, whichever is lower.

22. _____

23. The library extends its collection through interlibrary loan services by initiating loans for its customers. Fees may be charged to cover costs.

23. _____

Technology Guidelines

24. The library provides public access to the Internet at no charge for all residents.

24. _____

25. The library has the ability to send and receive faxes on site.

25. _____

Public Relations Guidelines

26. The library uses basic public relations and marketing tools such as brochures, flyers, bookmarks, newspaper, radio, and television to publicize its programs and services.

26. _____

Enhanced Level

Libraries must achieve all guidelines listed at the Essential Level, and any eighteen of the following, to be accredited at the Enhanced Level:

Governance, Funding and Administration Guidelines

1. Library board meetings with the library director in attendance are scheduled at least every other month.
1. _____
2. The library board delegates active management of the library to the library director.
2. _____
3. The library board has authority, within legal limits determined locally, over the library's budget.
3. _____
4. The library has a written planning document which addresses the library and information needs of the community. This is developed in conjunction with the board, and includes specific information about growth and development of services and programs.
A copy of this plan is submitted with this application for Accreditation.
4. _____
5. The library has a Friends of the Library Group and/or a Library Foundation, which is organized as a 501(c)(3)⁷ organization for the purpose of accepting tax-exempt donations. The library may establish an account with an existing community or area foundation in lieu of organizing a separate library foundation.
5. _____
6. The library annually submits required statistical data to the Nebraska Library Commission, using a Library Commission-designated product such as Bibliostat™ Collect.⁸
6. _____
7. The library director prepares and presents to the board a financial statement meets local accounting standards and requirements.
7. _____
8. The library's local government revenue for the most recently reported fiscal year is at least 85% of either the average local revenue or the average local per capita for libraries within the same size category, based on the population of the Legal Service Area. The revenue levels are based on the figures reported annually on the Public Library Statistical Survey. "Local Government Revenue" is the amount reported in the Library Finance section of the Public Library Statistical Survey, under the heading of "Local Government Revenue." Where appropriate, the per capita amounts will be determined separately for separate Revenue sources. For libraries supported primarily by a permanent endowment, the amount received from the endowment will be construed as local support.

⁷ See Nebraska Statutes sections 21-1901-1991, Nebraska Nonprofit Corporation Act.

⁸ The library must respond to at least 85% of the question of the annual Public Library Statistical Report in order for this guideline to be met.

Legal Service Area	Local Revenue per capita	Total Local Revenue
Less than 500	\$25.59	\$8,771
500 – 999	\$24.17	\$18,408
1,000 – 1,499	\$28.21	\$33,790
1,500 – 2,499	\$25.48	\$47,641
2,500 – 4,999	\$34.09	\$119,008
5,000 – 9,999	\$31.18	\$229,560
10,000 – 49,999	\$26.52	\$605,922
50,000 and above	\$22.46	\$7,445,117

8. _____

Service and Facilities Guidelines

9. Minimum days and hours of library service are as indicated below, based on the library's LSA:

Legal Service Area	Minimum Hours per week	Minimum Days per week
Less than 500	15	3
500 – 1,499	20	3
1,500 – 2,499	25	4
2,500 – 4,999	35	5
5,000 – 9,999	50	5
10,000 and above	60	6

9. _____

10. The library is open for service on evening⁹ and/or weekend¹⁰ hours, at least as follows:

Legal Service Area	Evening Hours	Weekend Hours
Less than 500	0	3
500 – 1,499	2	3
1,500 – 2,499	2	2
2,500 – 4,999	2	2
5,000 – 9,999	4	3
10,000 and above	6	5

10. _____

11. The library is registered for and actively uses licensed databases made available through the Nebraska Library Commission.

11. _____

⁹ Evening hours include any hours after 6:00 P.M.

¹⁰ Weekend hours include any hours on Saturday or Sunday.

12. The library offers a variety of programs and services, both through outreach and in-house, at all age levels. This includes programming for children, youth, and adult members of the community.

12. _____

13. The library evaluates one library program annually in terms of outcomes achieved. A copy of this evaluation is submitted with this application for accreditation.

13. _____

Personnel Guidelines

14. Library staff members participate in the Public Librarian Certification Program sponsored by the Nebraska Library Commission (or an appropriate equivalent), at the following levels:

Legal Service Area	# Staff Enrolled in Program
Less than 500	1
500 – 1,499	1
1,500 – 2,499	1
2,500 – 4,999	2
5,000 – 9,999	3
10,000 and above	4

14. _____

15. The library employs a staff person who is responsible in part for planning and providing services to children and youth. That staff person serves the library and information needs of the young people of the community and youth-related needs of parents and other adults.

15. _____

Collection Guidelines

16. The library has a Collection Development policy that provides for periodic review and updating of materials.

16. _____

17. The library expends at least 15% of its annual operating expenditures, or expenditures made on the library's behalf, on collection development. This includes expenditures for both print and non-print collection materials.

17. _____

18. The library collection includes at least 2.5 items per capita, or a total of 10,000, whichever is greater.

18. _____

19. The library circulates at least 4.5 items per capita annually. This is determined by dividing total annual circulation by the population of the Legal Service Area.

19. _____

20. The library provides interlibrary loan services through reciprocal borrowing arrangements. Fees charged serve to cover costs.

20. _____

Technology Guidelines

21. The library provides remote online access to the library's catalog (OPAC). 21. _____

Public Relations Guidelines

22. Library personnel target special groups within the community for programs or services. A community analysis would precede marketing planning so that communication is designed to meet identified needs for identified target group.

22. _____

Excellent Level

Libraries must achieve all guidelines listed at the Essential and Enhanced Levels, any fourteen of the following, to be accredited at the Excellent Level:

Governance, Funding and Administration Guidelines

1. Library policies cover the following facets of library operation: personnel, resources, weeding of obsolete materials, public services, complaints, continuing education, facilities, use of meeting rooms, confidentiality of patron records, use of technology, including an Internet Acceptable Use policy. Copies of policies are submitted with this application for Accreditation.

1. _____

2. The library director is responsible for submitting complete public library data reports for the year through Bibliostat™ Collect, or other product designated by the Nebraska Library Commission.

2. _____

3. The library director participates in the preparation of the written annual budget request for the library in consultation with the board. This request is presented to the library's funding authority(ies).

3. _____

4. The library director works with the board to develop and review annually a Technology Plan, either as a separate document or as a component to the library's Long Range Plan. The director works with staff and the board to implement approved recommendations. A copy of the Technology Plan is submitted with this application for Accreditation.

4. _____

5. The library's local government revenue for the most recently reported fiscal year is at least 105% of either the average local revenue or the average local per capita for libraries within the same size category, based on the population of the Legal Service Area. The revenue levels are based on the figures reported annually on the Public Library Statistical Survey. "Local Government Revenue" is the amount reported in the Library Finance section of the Public Library Statistical Survey, under the heading of "Local Government Revenue." Where appropriate, the per capita amounts will be determined separately for separate revenue sources. For libraries supported primarily by a permanent endowment, the amount received from the endowment will be construed as local support.

Legal Service Area	Local Revenue per capita	Total Local Revenue
Less than 500	\$31.61	\$10,835
500 – 999	\$29.86	\$22,739
1,000 – 1,499	\$34.85	\$41,741
1,500 – 2,499	\$31.48	\$58,850
2,500 – 4,999	\$42.12	\$147,009
5,000 – 9,999	\$38.51	\$283,575
10,000 – 49,999	\$32.76	\$748,492
50,000 and above*	\$27.74	\$9,196,909

5. _____

*This Guideline waived for Lincoln and Omaha because they are a universe of two, and a percentage of the average of the two is not realistic.

6. Library board members serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Board members have staggered, finite terms of service. By-laws provide for the mid-term replacement of members who cannot or do not fulfill their responsibilities.

6. _____

Service and Facilities Guidelines

7. Library staff and/or board member(s) procured at least one grant from an independent organization¹¹, within the last five years to supplement library programs and services. 7. _____

Personnel Guidelines

8. The director participates in professional library associations and activities.

8. _____

9. The director encourages staff and board members to participate in professional associations and activities, by providing paid time off and registration fee compensation

9. _____

10. The library staff includes a designated staff member who is responsible in part for providing reference and information services. This staff member is currently certified in the Public Librarian Certification Program sponsored by the Nebraska Library Commission (or an appropriate equivalent), at the following level:

10. _____

Legal Service Area	Minimum Certification Level
Less than 500	I
500 – 1,499	I
1,500 – 2,499	I
2,500 – 4,999	II
5,000 – 9,999	III
10,000 and above	V

¹¹ “Independent organization” means one not related to the local library, such as the local Library Foundation or Friend’s group.

Collection Guidelines

11. The library expended an average of at least 20% of its annual operating expenditures over the three previous years on the collection. This includes expenditures for both print and non-print collection materials. 11. _____

12. The library collection includes at least 4.0 items per capita, or a total of 10,000, whichever is greater. 12. _____

13. The library circulates at least 8.0 items per capita annually. 13. _____

14. The library extends its collection by participating in reciprocal borrowing. 14. _____

Technology Guidelines

15. The library subscribes to one or more commercial databases, in addition to any provided through the Nebraska Library Commission. 15. _____

Public Relations Guidelines

16. The director works with the board to develop an effective marketing plan and implements approved recommendations. 16. _____

Guideline Checklist

Essential Level

Governance, Funding and Administration Guidelines

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Service and Facilities Guidelines

9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____

Personnel Guidelines

14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

Collection Guidelines

17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____
23. _____

Technology Guidelines

24. _____
25. _____

Public Relations Guidelines

26. _____

Enhanced Level

Governance, Funding and Administration Guidelines

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Service and Facilities Guidelines

9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____

Personnel Guidelines

14. _____
15. _____

Collection Guidelines

16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

Technology Guidelines

21. _____

Public Relations Guidelines

22. _____

Excellent Level

Governance, Funding and Administration Guidelines

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Service and Facilities Guidelines

7. _____

Personnel Guidelines

8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Collection Guidelines

11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____

Technology Guidelines

15. _____

Public Relations Guidelines

16. _____

Glossary

Bibliostat™ Collect – Web-based product developed to facilitate the submission of public library statistical information. This product replaces the annual Public Library Statistical Report previously submitted in paper each year.

Database – One or more large structured sets of persistent data, usually associated with software to update and query the data. A simple database might be a single file containing many records, each of which contains the same set of fields where each field is a certain fixed width. (FOLDOC: Free on-line Dictionary of Computing: <http://foldoc.doc.ic.ac.uk>). For purposes of this document, *database* or *databases* refer to electronic subscription reference resources.

Federal Data Elements – The Nebraska Public Library Statistical Survey includes some questions that are asked by all states and territories in the public library data collection process. These questions, or data elements, are determined and defined by the Federal-State Cooperative System of State Data Coordinators. In order to have consistency in data collection and to allow for national comparison of certain statistics, the same definitions for these terms are used nationwide. In the survey available through Bibliostat™ Collect, the federal data elements are those in purple font.

Legal Service Area Legal Service Area is based on a library's funding source and the latest U.S. Census figures (www.census.gov) , with final determination made by the Library Commission. This figure is available on each library's Public Library Statistical Survey form.

Library Board of Trustees – A library board of trustees is a group of citizens responsible for the governing of a public library. Board members are the vital link between the library and its community. Trustees serve as library advocates and leaders in developing responsible and creative service to all members of the public. Public library trustees are volunteers who serve their community with no financial compensation. Members may be reimbursed, however, for any reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of library business.

With few exceptions Nebraska public library boards are administrative boards and carry full responsibility for the library and its policy. For example, the board selects, appoints, and regularly evaluates the performance of the administrative librarian. The librarian serves as chief administrator and is fully responsible for administering library policy, personnel selection and management, development and administration of programs and services, and selection of materials in a professional manner.

It is a violation of sound administrative standards when the administrative librarian independently changes or fails to follow established library board policy or when the library board engages in direct management. (Nebraska Trustee Handbook, Chapter 2: <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/trustee/chaptertwo/c2p1.html>)

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 5: Public Library Accreditation



- **What is accreditation?**
- **Is our library eligible for accreditation?**
- **What does the accreditation process involve?**
- **Why should the library participate in this program?**

The Nebraska Library Commission Public Library Accreditation guidelines were first developed so that public libraries would have a basis for defining basic level of service along with a challenge for developing and improving library services at a more advanced level.

In 2004, the accreditation guidelines were reviewed and revised to address the changing library and information needs. The basic and advanced levels of accreditation were replaced with three different levels: Essential, Enhanced and Excellent. The complete accreditation guidelines document is available at: nlc.nebraska.gov/libaccred/Guidelines.pdf

Any legally-established public library may apply for accreditation. The requirements for accreditation differ for each level. To qualify as an Essential Accredited library, it is necessary to meet all 26 Essential Guidelines. To qualify for Enhanced Accreditation, a library must meet all 26 of the Essential Guidelines and any 18 of the Enhanced Guidelines. To qualify for Excellent Accreditation status, a library must meet all of the Essential and Enhanced Guidelines, and any 14 of the Excellent Guidelines.

The topics that are covered in all the levels include the following:

- Governance.
- Funding.
- Staff size and educational level.
- Hours.
- Collection size and maintenance.
- Equality of access (age, disability, location).
- Policy requirements.
- Board of trustees' requirements (bylaws, meeting frequency, orientation).
- Program and service requirements.
- Outreach and public relations.
- Minimum space requirements.

Why should your library consider participating in the program?

It is one of the eligibility requirements for state aid to public libraries. It is also a prerequisite for all grant programs available through the Nebraska Library Commission. The accreditation program also serves as a basis for the distribution of state and federal funds to public libraries.

What if we decided to participate? How do we apply?

On July 15 of each year, the application letters are mailed to unaccredited public libraries and libraries scheduled to renew accreditation in that year. The library needs to return a completed accreditation guideline application for which level it is applying and any other required documents to the Commission before September 1 of that year. But several months prior to July 15, the library director and library board should review the accreditation application together to see if any new or updated policies need to be created and approved; check to see if certification requirements are met; and address any other topics as required of the accreditation process. This pre-planning will help to alleviate any last minute concerns.

What happens after the applications are submitted?

Libraries that meet the accreditation requirements for that level will receive a Certificate of Accreditation from the Nebraska Library Commission by October 1. Libraries are accredited for a three-year period.

******Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are questions about public library accreditation to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- After we have received our Certificate of Accreditation, how do we make sure we at least maintain our level of accreditation in those three years?
- What do we need to do to meet the next level of accreditation?
- How do we work with local government officials to inform them about the requirements of the accreditation process?

Where can we look for additional information related to Public Library Accreditation?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *Creating Policies for Results*
- *Library Security and Safety Handbook: Prevention, Policies, and Procedures*
- *The New Planning for Results: a Streamlined Approach*
- *Public Library Manager's Forms, Policies, and Procedures Manual with CD-ROM*

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

EVALUATION FORM
Chapter 5: Public Library Accreditation



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

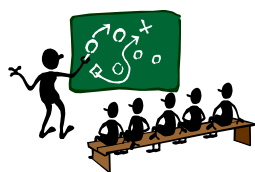
Name_____

Public Library_____

14. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.
15. What other topics/information concerning **“Public Library Accreditation”** would you like to see addressed in this chapter?
16. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?
17. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?
18. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:
19. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?
7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:
20. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.

THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL



CHAPTER 6

Certification for Library Boards and Public Librarians

What is the Library Board Certification Program, and why should boards be involved?

Just as it is important for library staff to participate in continuing education activities, board members should also be involved in professional development. The Board Certification Program helps encourage board members to develop, maintain and improve their skills; recognizes them for their efforts; and allows them to participate in the library's accreditation process. Within the library's budget, the library board should designate some funding to support participation of any board member in continuing education activities.

What are the requirements of the Board Certification Program?

Each public library board as a group needs to have a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education credits in a three-year period in order to meet certification requirements. Since board certification is a requirement for any of the three levels of public library accreditation, a board must meet this requirement before a library's accreditation period has expired or before the library can apply for accreditation.

How does a board meet the certification requirements?

The most important concept to remember is the board is being certified, not the individual board members. To be certified, the whole library board must complete 20 hours of continuing education activities during a three-year period before a certificate is issued. Individual board members can earn continuing education credits that are applied to the whole board's certification requirement.

For example, five board members could view a two-hour video separately or as a group and earn 10 hours of continuing education for the board, or one board member could attend a five-hour workshop and apply the five hours toward the board's certification. These examples illustrate that the certification requirement may be contributed by the entire board or by dividing the requirement among the individual board members.

What are continuing education activities that can be applied to board certification?

Here are some suggested activities that could be applied toward certification requirements. Please contact the Continuing Education Coordinator at the Nebraska Library Commission if there is a question about whether a continuing education activity can be applied toward the program.

- Workshops and/or conferences sponsored by the Nebraska Library Commission, the regional library systems, the Nebraska Library Association, (including the Trustees, Users and Friends Section (TUFS) or other library-sponsored continuing education events.
- Videotaped sessions of topics relating to libraries and library boards that are available from the Nebraska Library Commission or regional library system offices. A suggested list of videotapes available for use toward board certification is on the Nebraska Library Commission web site at: <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/trustees/trustees.html>.
- Consulting sessions with a regional library system administrator, Nebraska Library Commission staff member or other consultant to assist with planning, board management, self-evaluation, personnel management, policymaking or other needed topics.
- Self-guided online instruction on a topic related to libraries and/or trusteeship.
- Discussion as part of a board meeting related to the “Chat for Continuing Education” activity from any of the Trustee Fact Sheets provided through the Nebraska Library Commission or from the *Nebraska Library Board Manual* Discussion Guides.
- College coursework related to topics that assist board members with their responsibilities in service to the library.

How do board members notify the Library Commission of credit hours earned?

Library board members can use the continuing education reporting form for trustees that is available on the Nebraska Library Commission website at:

<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/trustees/CEreportingform.html>.

This form can be turned in after board members have completed any continuing education activities, anytime or prior to the expiration of the board’s certification. If this form is not used, a board member or library director can contact the Continuing Education Coordinator at the Library Commission with the following information: The name of the public library, board members participating in the continuing education event/activity, the name of the event/activity, the date of the event/activity and the number of hours connected with the event/activity.

How does the Library Commission keep track of the continuing education hours for the Board Certification Program?

The Library Commission maintains a database of boards participating in the program. This database is not accessible via the Commission’s website. Contact the Continuing Education Coordinator to find out the number of accumulated hours the board has reported.

What does a board have to do to make sure the certificate is renewed?

As long as the library board has accumulated at least 20 hours by the end of the three-year certification period, the Library Commission will automatically renew the certification. No additional paperwork is needed. There is no cost for the renewal.

A new certificate will be mailed to the library with the new date of certification based on three years from the date of renewal. If a board has accumulated more than 20 hours in the previous certification period, those hours cannot be transferred to the new certification period.

What is the Public Librarian Certification Program?

This program establishes an expected level of education and training for those involved in library work in Nebraska. It also provides opportunity for professional growth. The Nebraska Public Librarian Certification Program serves as a tool to improve library services throughout the state. It also gives guidelines for public library boards to use in selecting and retaining personnel; motivates public librarians to acquire, maintain and develop their skills; and recognizes public librarians who update their knowledge and skills.

Boards of public libraries that participate in the Public Library Accreditation Program also are required to hire a library director who is certified. It is important for the board to support and encourage staff to participate in a variety of continuing education activities. This can be done through providing a line item in the library's budget to cover the costs related to staff travel and time. This support also can include paying staff members for their time involved in continuing education activities.

What are the initial requirements of the Public Librarian Certification Program?

An applicant fills out an application form that is available on the Nebraska Library Commission website at: <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/ce/PLCertApp.html>

- There is no charge to apply for certification.
- A provisional certificate valid for three years will be issued. Within three years, the applicant must complete the four Basic Skills courses and accumulate at least 20 additional hours of continuing education credit.
- An applicant with an MLS degree qualifies for certification without taking the Basic Skills classes. At this level, the applicant needs to accumulate at least 45 hours of continuing education credits by the end of the three-year period.

The four Basic Skills Training Courses, <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/basic.html>, provided through the Nebraska Library Commission are designed to focus on core library services and functions. These courses are offered approximately every six months or twice-a-year, so to complete all the courses it would take two years. The four classes are: Collection Development, Public Services, Public Library Administration and Organization of Materials.

The 20 additional hours of continuing education can be obtained through regional library system or Nebraska Library Commission workshops, videotapes, online courses and/or other learning opportunities.

A limit of 10 hours can be obtained through the videotape format. A person should contact the Continuing Education Coordinator at the Nebraska Library Commission if there is a question whether a particular continuing education activity can be applied toward certification.

What happens at the end of the three-year Provisional Certificate period?

If the requirements for certification are met by the end of the three-year provisional period, the applicant will receive a Public Librarian Certificate without the designation of provisional. The new requirements for the next three-year certification period will include the accumulation of at least 45 hours of continuing education credits by the date noted on the new certificate.

What are the different levels of certification?

There are five different levels of certification based on the applicant's previous education. The levels are as follows:

- **Level I** - High school diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate *and* the Basic Skills Training Courses or the equivalent from the Library Technical Assistant coursework
- **Level II** - High school diploma or GED certificate *and* 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of college credit, *and* the Basic Skills Training Courses or the equivalent from the Library Technical Assistant coursework
- **Level III** - Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university *and* the Basic Skills Training Courses or the equivalent from the Library Technical Assistant coursework
- **Level IV** - Graduate degree from an accredited college or university *and* the Basic Skills Training Courses or the equivalent from the Library Technical Assistant coursework
- **Level V** - Graduate degree in library or information science from an institution of higher education accredited by the American Library Association

How does the Library Commission keep track of the continuing education hours for the Public Librarian Certification Program?

The Library Commission maintains a database of individuals who have applied for librarian certification and participate in continuing education activities through the Library Commission and/or any of the Nebraska regional library systems. If an individual wants to attend a continuing education activity that is not sponsored or provided by the Library Commission or one of the regional library systems, it is important to contact the Continuing Education Coordinator to find out whether the continuing education activity can be applied toward the certification program. There is a Continuing Education Reporting form, <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/ce/ceform2.html>, available on the website to use to assist with reporting continuing education activities outside of the Library Commission and regional library systems.

What does an individual have to do to make sure the certificate is renewed?

If the person has completed all the requirements within the certification period, the Library Commission will automatically renew the certificate. There is no charge for renewal. A new certificate will be mailed to the participant. Once the new certificate has been issued, the new certification period will begin. If a person accumulated more than 45 hours in the previous certification period, those hours cannot be transferred to the new certification period.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 6: Certification for Library Boards and Public Librarians



- Why should the board participate in the certification program?
- What is involved in participating in the program?
- How can board members be supportive of their library staff participating in certification?
- Does each board member have to earn credits in order for the board to be certified?

Participation in continuing education activities is important for library staff members so they can attain new skills, enhance current skills and abilities, and network with other colleagues. It is also advantageous that library board members participate in professional growth since the responsibility of providing the best library service for the community involves a teamwork effort between library staff and the library board. The Nebraska Library Commission helps to support board members and library staff participation in continuing education opportunities through the two certification programs: Board and Public Librarian

Board Certification

- Encourages board members to develop, maintain and improve their skills.
- Recognizes them for their efforts.
- Allows the library to participate in the Nebraska Public Library Accreditation program.

Public Librarian Certification

- Serves as a tool to improve library services throughout the state.
- Motivates public librarians to acquire, maintain and develop their skills.
- Recognizes public librarians who update their knowledge and skills.

Both certification programs require either a library board (as individuals and/or as a group) or an individual library staff member or staff members to attain a minimum of designated hours in a three-year period. Board members can earn continuing education credits by attending workshops; watching videotaped sessions of topics relating to libraries and library boards; and receiving on-site consultative assistance from a Library Commission or regional library system staff member. Continuing education credits earned through either program are recorded and maintained in databases at the Nebraska Library Commission.

How can public library boards be locally supportive of the certification programs?

- The library board should designate some funding to support participation of any board member and library staff in continuing education activities. This can be done through providing line items in the library's budget to cover the costs related to staff travel and time involved in continuing education activities.

- Boards also can support staff members by paying them for their time spent being involved in continuing education opportunities. This education is an important part of their jobs.

******Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are questions about certification for library boards and public librarians to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- How should we plan for our continuing education activities this year?
- How will we keep track of our continuing education activities? Who will submit these hours to the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator?
- How can we support our library staff in the certification program participation?

Where can we look for additional information related to Certification for Library Boards and Public Librarians?

Websites:

- **Commission Training Portal** – the calendar for Commission-related workshops
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/training/train.asp>
- **Current Library Board Certification Chart** – the current status of board certification
http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/boardcertification/board_certification.asp
- **Library Commission Calendar** – the calendar for library-related activities and workshops held regionally, statewide or nationally
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libcal/libcal.html>
- **Public Librarian Certification** – the program and process
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/ce/libcert.html>
- **Public Library Board Certification** – the program and process
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/trustees/pubcert.html>
- **Regional Library Systems** – the main web page to access all the regional library systems' web pages
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/system/>
- **Video List for Public Library Board and Librarian Certification** – available videos from the Nebraska Library Commission or regional library system offices to meet certification requirements
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/trustees/videolist.html>

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

EVALUATION FORM
Chapter 6: Certification for Library Boards and Public Librarians



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name _____

Public Library _____

1. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.

2. What other topics/information concerning **“Certification for Library Boards and Public Librarians”** would you like to see addressed in this chapter?

3. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?

4. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?

5. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:

6. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No ___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?

7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:

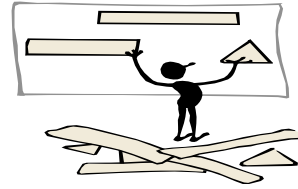
8. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.

THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

CHAPTER 7

Planning



Why should a library board plan?

How often do you leave for the grocery store without a list and return home with dozens of items you didn't need, but without the one or two things you absolutely needed? Nobody would ever think of building a house or starting a business without a plan. Yet it is often hard to convince library directors and library boards to create a long-range or strategic plan. The most frequent excuse is, "We don't have enough time," or, "We are too busy getting our work done."

Information technology, publishing and book industry, and society itself are in the middle of the greatest series of changes since the invention of the printing press. In 1990, few libraries had computers. Now they are everywhere. Library services need to change to reflect changes in our communities. They cannot exist in a vacuum. The library board or director who refuses to plan is like the shopper going to the store without a shopping list. The library may well be offering dozens of services that are not really needed by the community, while failing to offer the one or two services that might provide a greater benefit.

Planning is not a frill, but one of the most important trusts that the community gives to the library board. Planning, in an age when dramatic change comes almost faster than we can comprehend, seems like a futile exercise. But the very fact that change is so rapid is even more reason that every library must have a plan to cope with rapid change and the effects it can have on the library.

Former UCLA basketball coach John Wooden said, "Failure to plan is planning to fail." Board members must be visionaries for the library. While they should plan as far ahead as possible, with the rate of change, three-year plans are becoming common.

What are the benefits of having a plan?

The benefits of a plan include:

- Allows rational justification of your budget with governing authorities.
- Helps you prioritize programs and direct efforts toward attaining objectives.
- Motivates the staff and board.
- Encourages coordination and accountability.
- Gives a clear measure for success.
- Assures enough lead time to undertake projects effectively.
- Leads to steady growth by encouraging yearly evaluation.

The board is generally recognized as the responsible party for planning, and the director is responsible for developing strategies to accomplish the goals set by the board. But all planning for the library is a team effort of the board, director and staff.

What is a plan?

A plan is:

- **A summary of the current status of the library.** Looks critically at what the library does now. By assessing the current situation, obvious needs and directions can be identified. Don't be afraid to brag about a good library.
- **An assessment of community needs.** A library's first responsibility is to address the needs of its community. It is basic planning to know the community needs.
- **A statement of the library's mission, goals and objectives.** Once the library's overall role and mission are defined, specific goals with measurable objectives can be set. All decisions should be made in view of the plan.
- **An ongoing process.** No plan is perfect. Unexpected events necessitate changes in any plan, and changing times present new problems and suggest new approaches to meeting library goals. Unless some crisis requires immediate updating of the plan, it should be updated on an annual basis.

What is the process of planning?

Just as a shopping list will be different for the single person and for the family of ten, the *process* to create a plan may vary according to the library and community's size. Any library, including smaller libraries or those new to planning, will benefit from undertaking the process outlined in *The New Planning for Results* if its board and staff have the commitment, time and resources to follow through. However, for novice planners, the process is less important than the fact that planning is carried out. First-time planners often want to follow a simplified process that is less time-intensive. Even a simplified process will help the board and staff gain vital information about the library and community, and acquire the experience and confidence needed to expand the process during the next planning cycle.

The final plan should reflect the following components:

- **Think long range.** A plan that is considered long-range will span from three to five years. The goals set should be broad and visionary so they will take time to complete. The director and staff will then build the annual objectives based on the long-range goals.
- **Be flexible.** It is a common misconception that a long-range plan is locked into place once it is written. In a world that changes dramatically every day, the ability and willingness to change and adapt to new conditions is crucial. Consider the library's long-range plan to be a flexible and changeable document.
- **Have accountability.** Every written objective should be measurable so that it can be determined whether or not it was completed. Each goal will then have objectives or action plans that will provide details such as a timeline and responsible parties.
- **Be visionary.** Long-range planning means thinking big. That can be difficult for library boards and governments that are accustomed to working within tight budgets. However, a plan without a vision is worse than no plan at all. Vision requires one to temporarily forget budgetary constraints and dream about what the library could be. Vision and progress always require risk.

Who should be involved in the planning process?

The minimum number needed to draft a long-range plan is one. However, just as the grocery shopper benefits from consulting spouse and family before leaving for the store, the long-range plan for the library benefits from input from multiple individuals. The library director, with the help of staff, can be entrusted to gather statistics about a community. Important statistics include:

- Population size of the community broken down by age, gender, racial heritage, etc.
- The existence of large or growing groups of newcomers to the community, whether they are urban or rural transplants, new ethnic groups, etc.
- Economic factors regarding the community, such as household incomes and source of payrolls.
- Educational profile of the community.

By talking to other stakeholders, library planners can add to the strength and reliability of their plan as well as obtain buy-in from the public. There is an endless list of individuals and groups that might be consulted as part of a basic planning process. Suggested stakeholders include:

- The mayor and city council.
- Municipal employees such as an economic development officer, senior center director or recreation department director.
- Representatives from the PTA and/or teachers union.
- Representatives of active service groups such as Elks, Rotary or Lions.
- Representatives of other social/service organizations such as those representing minority populations.
- Representatives of the religious community.
- Current library users.
- Representatives of the business community.
- Homeschoolers.
- Those not currently using the library.

How does the library board gather information?

Probably the most common mistake library planners make when consulting the community in preparation for a long-range plan is to ask people about the library. **The real purpose of consulting all of these community representatives is to find out about them--what they are doing and what is important in their lives and work.** The library staff and board are the experts in the broad array of library services. It is up to the experts to be creative in proposing new services or changes in services to meet emerging needs. The mayor and city council may be interested in developing tourism in a community, but they never think of the library as a vehicle for collecting and disseminating local information of interest to tourists. If you ask someone what the library should be like, they will answer on their preconceptions about what a library is. Instead, inquire about community needs and then apply library resources to fashion the services to help the community fill those needs.

Statistics and other information to be gathered about the library might answer the following questions:

- What services currently are being offered?
- How have usage patterns been changing in the last few years?
- What is the composition of the collection? How many books does the library own? How many books-on-tape? Videos? Children's books, etc.?
- What is the age of the collection? What is the average publication date for each section of the nonfiction collection?

There are a variety of ways to ask the large array of stakeholders about community needs. One of the simplest but most effective is simply to invite them to the library or a neutral site and talk to them. Find someone who is experienced in conducting focus group interviews. Construct one or more groups built around particular interests, such as the needs of children in the community or the needs of immigrants. Assist the interviewer in eliciting the opinions of interested parties regarding what is important to them.

By discussing these and similar facts about the library and the community, the staff and board can come to some basic conclusions about the library on which to plan future services. A library with a small large-print collection in a community with a stable, aging population may want to buy more large-print books, for example. A science collection with relatively few titles less than one or two years old probably needs updating.

Library planners probably most often gather information by means of surveys. If you decide to use a survey, consider the following:

- What is the specific question you are trying to answer? What hypothesis are you testing?
- Don't ask questions simply for the sake of asking. For example, if you ask whether the respondent went to college, how will having the information affect your investigation? How will you use the information?
- Will your survey reach your target audience? Surveys done in the library are useless for learning the needs and opinions of non-users. Current library users do not necessarily represent a cross-section of the community.
- How will your survey be distributed?
- How will your survey be tabulated?
- Do a pretest to make sure your respondents have the same understanding of the questions you do.
- How will you have your survey results reported to the community?

Again, consider enlisting the help of someone experienced in writing and conducting surveys before you get started. This doesn't have to cost anything. You may find a volunteer at a local chamber of commerce or a nearby university extension office. A local resident who has conducted surveys as a part of his/her business may be willing to help. If you write your own survey, at the very least have someone critique it for you. A poorly executed survey can have less value than no survey at all. It may even lead you to opposite conclusions from those you might have reached otherwise.

What are the parts of a plan outline?

Title Page – This should be attractive, easy to read and dated.

Table of Contents – This is optional, but necessary if your basic plan is longer than ten pages.

Executive Summary – This is a one-page synopsis of the basic plan that includes, at a minimum, the mission and the goals. This is the only part of the basic plan that everyone is sure to read, so it is important that it be clear, concise and easy for the reader to see the library's priorities for the planning cycle.

Introduction – An introduction provides a brief description of the planning process used. It includes the names of the planning committee members and the groups they represent.

Community Needs – Here you include a brief summary of the community's vision, current conditions and community needs. This may be included as part of the introduction.

Mission Statement – The mission statement reflects the selected service responses in your plan; therefore, there is no need to list the service responses separately.

Goals & Objectives – All goals and objectives should be listed, but you will have to decide the best order in which to list them.

Selected Activities – This is optional, but selected activities can be included to highlight new and interesting services.

The specific time frame your plan should cover will depend on how ambitious your plan is, or how many activities you hope to carry out. There is no magic formula that dictates that your plan should last five years, three years, or even one year. Do what makes sense for your library and your community. The most important thing is to be adaptable. Follow your plan and revisit it along the way. Make sure that it is taking you where you want to go, and revise it as necessary. At the end of the planning cycle, when all evaluations are in, start over. Create a new plan and perhaps go a little farther in your information-gathering process.

What other types of planning should the library board undertake?

In addition to general long-range planning for the entire library, you may also want to consider planning projects focusing on special issues such as technology, eliminating barriers between people and library services, or disaster preparedness.

Building Projects

Sooner or later, many trustees face the necessity for additional library space. Reasons for building vary. Lack of space, community growth or other community changes, outdated structures, or condemnations are the most frequent reasons. A decision to build usually lags behind the need.

There are several stages to a building project, the first being one of awareness. We would like to think that we plan in advance for needed space, but that seldom happens in real life. In most communities the public library is out of space (or out-of-date) long before plans begin for a new building. Sometimes the board is aware of the problem and hires a director with the specific goal of building a new facility. Sometimes the staff is aware of the situation and must educate the board before plans can move ahead. When the board and staff are aware of the problem (and convinced that a new building is needed), activity can move to making the community aware of the problem.

It is important to be sure that at every step the public is consulted, kept informed, and remains supportive through a public or community relations program. To these ends, be sure to publicize the need for a new or expanded library, the decision to study the situation, the results of the study; and especially the recommendations. Not only is a sizable amount of public money being spent, but also an institution is being created whose value and service for all people is projected far into the future.

Few projects can be as exciting, intimidating, fatiguing and rewarding for a library board as the constructing of a new or expanded library building. There may be individuals on the board who have dealt with some type of construction, but for the board as a whole it is often a new experience. New libraries just do not happen often enough in most communities for boards to become familiar with the process. Library building projects require intense deliberations, complex and extended procedure in securing and managing funds, extensive planning and follow-up on a multitude of vital details. Any building project, from deliberations to ribbon cutting, requires close and cooperative working relationships with the library director, local governing body and other local officials and agencies.

What are the library building project steps?

- Determine the solution to the building's inadequacies.
- Provide leadership in the campaign to inform the community of the decided course of action and secure necessary support for the project.
- Appoint a building committee and assign tasks.
- Select and hire an architect.
- Obtain financing for the project.
- If a new building is needed, select and purchase the site.
- Approve preliminary and final architectural plans.
- Solicit and approve bid document.
- Approve all contracts and any change orders to the contract.

Planning for Growth

Preparing the community to build a new library is usually a long process. Just saying you need a new building will not win much support. You need to systematically document the need in a very businesslike manner. The process by which needs are determined is termed the "planning process."

Planning does not relate solely to plans for a new or expanded building, but is a crucial part of the building process. There are consultants and publications for help such as *The New Planning for Results* by Sandra Nelson.

You will look at your community through the planning process: How many school-age children are in your community? How is this number expected to change in the next ten years? Are there changes in residential patterns? How many citizens are over 65? Will they be the dominant portion of the community in ten years? Where will schools be located ten years from now?

All of these questions, and untold numbers more, will impact what needs to be done regarding library service for your community. You must remember that you are developing a plan for library service, not just justifying a new building.

Community Support

Community support for your plan will be strengthened by objective, verifiable information. If generally accepted standards say that your community library should house 50,000 books and the present building has room for 25,000, that is a strong argument. If the law says that public facilities should be accessible to the handicapped and your present building cannot be made accessible, that is a strong argument. If the community encourages educational programs for children and your library has no room for programs, that is also a strong argument. If the building needs a new roof, new heating and air conditioning, is not handicap accessible, etc.; is it a sound business decision to continue putting money into a building that cannot be made adequate? Does another community organization need a building the size of the present library? If so, could building a new library meet the needs of both groups?

It is important that every board member and every staff member understand why a new building is needed. Knowledgeable responses to, “Why do we need a new library building?” given in the grocery checkout line or at church will carry much influence. At the same time that every staff and board member should be prepared for casual responses, a formal plan for public information should be prepared. Put together an educational (and entertaining) presentation on what a new library could mean to the community. Set your goal to educate everyone as to why a new library is needed. Understand that you will not convince everyone. Keep making the point that this is to be “their” new library. This will take longer than you think.

Technology

Libraries are in an extreme transition, and even the smallest rural public library is no exception. Computers have unquestionably given librarians and library users powerful new research capabilities outside the library’s walls. With these new technologies and the expanded role of libraries come policy questions for the local library and its board.

The following are questions to consider when developing a technology plan:

- Is it best to acquire materials for the collection or provide access through electronic sources?
- What services will be free vs. those having a fee?
- How will hardware and software be funded? How will upgrades be funded?
- What policies are needed regarding access to information on the Internet?
- How will access to electronic information published only as electronic information be provided?
- How will copyright be protected?
- How will our users be trained to use new library technologies?

- What changes to our facilities should we be planning for?
- What new networks and cooperatives can be formed using technology?
- Who will secure and maintain the computer equipment?
- What staffing needs will the new technologies require?
- How will patron confidentiality be protected?
- How do E-rate funding and other governmental programs affect our technology plan?

Information technologies are here to stay and it is a wise board which plans in advance when incorporating these technologies into the library facilities and services.

Barriers to Service

Although strides have been made by libraries across the state to eliminate physical barriers for people with disabilities who need and wish to use libraries, too many physical, language, cultural and other barriers still exist. They pose a special challenge for library trustees. Many are still not familiar with Title 24, Sec 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (federal law requiring public access to public buildings).

Some sense of the challenge to serve these users adequately may be ascertained by nothing more than a simple walk through the library as though “wearing someone else’s shoes,” in order to evaluate how signs, interior arrangements and building design help or hinder users. For example, what may seem a logically laid out library for an able-bodied person may present almost insurmountable barriers for a library user in a wheelchair, a person using a walker, or one who is unsteady with a cane.

Passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 underscores the necessity of removing those barriers. Title II of the Act requires nondiscrimination in state and local government services (including library services) and employment. A public entity must ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from services, programs and activities because existing buildings are inaccessible. The public entity can avoid compliance only if it will result in documented “undue hardship.” All new library facilities that began construction on or after January 25, 1992 must be accessible. Newly remodeled buildings or parts of buildings shall be made accessible to the “maximum” extent feasible. But whether or not the building per se is accessible, the service or program when viewed in its entirety must be readily accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Disaster Preparedness

Most libraries will rarely experience a severe emergency or natural disaster, but it is best to be prepared, just in case. Fires, floods, tornadoes and hazardous materials accidents can endanger lives, and it is important for libraries to have plans and/or policies in place for dealing with these types of emergencies. It is also important that staff be trained to handle emergencies properly.

The library board has the responsibility of protecting the library building and its holdings as well as the staff and the public. To be prepared, the library should have a written disaster plan as well as policies and procedures which cover issues of safety. Consideration should be given to questions such as:

- Are the collections and equipment, as well as the building itself, adequately insured against loss from fire, tornados, theft, flood and vandalism?
- What is the library doing to prevent loss from theft or vandalism?
- How would the library function in case of damage through a fire, storm or other natural disaster?

Library board members have the responsibility to protect the interests of one of the cultural centers of the community. Insurance policies and disaster readiness plans should be reviewed on a regular basis in order to make certain that proper levels and types of coverage are being carried.

Additional Resources:Planning:

Books (Available for request from the Nebraska Library Commission. Regional library system offices might also have copies available):

- *Checklist of Library Building Design Considerations* by William V. Sannwald
- *Disaster Planning* by Deborah D. Halstead
- *The New Planning for Results* by Sandra Nelson
- *Writing and Updating Technology Plans* by John M. Cohn

Websites:

- **Community Profiles** available at American Factfinder: <http://factfinder.census.gov>
- **Library Services & Technology Act Grant applications** nlc.nebraska.gov/grants/lsta
- **Public Library Accreditation Guidelines** nlc.nebraska.gov/libaccred/Guidelines.pdf

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 7: Planning



- **What is a library plan?**
- **How often should a library develop a plan?**
- **What are the benefits of planning?**
- **Who should be included in the planning process?**

Planning is not a frill, but one of the most important trusts that the community gives to the library board. Planning, in an age when dramatic change comes almost faster than we can comprehend, seems like a futile exercise. But the very fact that change is so rapid is even more reason that every library must have plan to cope with rapid change and the effects it can have on the library. While boards should plan as far ahead as possible, with the rate of change, three-year plans are becoming common.

A plan is:

- **A summary of the current status of the library.** Look critically at what the library does now. A plan is reality pushed into the future. By assessing the current situation, obvious needs and directions can be identified. Don't be afraid to brag about a good library.
- **An assessment of community needs.** A library's first responsibility is to address the needs of its community. It is basic planning to know what the community needs are.
- **A statement of the library's mission, goals, and objectives.** Once the library's overall role and mission are defined, specific goals with measurable objectives can be set. All decisions should be made in view of the plan.
- **An ongoing process.** No plan is perfect. Unexpected events necessitate changes in any plan, and changing times present new problems and suggest new approaches to meeting library goals. Unless some crisis requires immediate updating of the plan, it should be updated on an annual basis.

The benefits of a plan include:

- Allows rational justification of your budget with governing authorities.
- Helps you prioritize programs and direct efforts to attaining objectives.
- Motivates the staff and board.
- Encourages coordination and accountability.
- Gives a clear measure for success.
- Assures enough lead time to undertake projects effectively.
- Leads to steady growth by encouraging yearly evaluation.

What are other types of planning?

In addition to general long-range planning for the entire library, you may also want to consider planning projects focusing on special issues such as building projects, technology, eliminating barriers between people and library services, or disaster preparedness.

******Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are questions about planning to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- What are the different types of library planning?
- What are the benefits of library planning for us as a library and community?
- What are the needs of our community? Are we currently meeting those needs? If not, how do we?
- What will be happening in our library in five years? Ten years? Twenty years?

Where can we look for additional information related to Planning?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *Checklist of Library Building Design Considerations*
- *Disaster Planning*
- *The New Planning for Results*
- *Writing and Updating Technology Plans*

Websites:

- “Community Profiles”- American Factfinder-
<http://factfinder.census.gov>
- “Nebraska Department of Economic Development Databook”-
[http:// info.neded.org/databook.php](http://info.neded.org/databook.php)
- “Nebraska Economic Development Information Online”-
<http://sites.nppd.com/reports.asp>
- “U.S. Census Bureau Demographic Profiles”-
<http://censtats.census.gov/pub/Profiles.shtml>

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name_____

Public Library_____

21. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.

22. What other topics/information concerning **“Planning”** would you like to see addressed in this chapter?

23. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?

24. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?

25. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:

26. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No ___

Do you like the format? Yes___ No___

If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?

7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?

If yes, please explain:

27. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___

Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.



THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

CHAPTER 8

Budgeting and Funding

What do library board members need to know about the library budget?

A library budget includes the total cost of existing services and the finances required for moving the library forward to meet its goals and objectives. Quality library service begins with an adequate budget. The library board has the responsibility to develop the budget, to present it for final approval to the governing body, and to monitor the actual expenditures during the budget year. For this reason, each board member should:

- Know the library's financial base and background.
- Know the governmental unit(s) allocating the local appropriation.
- Know the local government's entire amounts of tax monies and the library's fair share of those tax monies.
- Know what restrictions apply to specific funds or budgets.
- Understand the financial needs of library operation and plan for growth and expansion in the future.
- Understand the basics of legal regulations and reporting required for library funding.
- Investigate other possible sources of funding support (state and federal aid or grants, a bond issue, endowments, trusts, memorials, dedicated tax revenue, gifts, foundation grants, donations, fines or fees).

What are the steps in the library budget process?

The budget reflects the library's goals and objectives. Therefore, before a budget can be formulated, the plan for library services must be developed and the goals and objectives established.

The budget preparation is a cooperative process involving library boards, the library director and staff, and funding agencies. Trustees should be aware that the calendar for the budget process will probably be set by the primary funding agency and should be followed closely. If there are multiple government agencies funding a library, the budget calendar may be different for each. There are several important steps in the budget process: preparation, presentation, and implementation.

Preparation

The librarian, staff and library board should share in a give-and-take process of budget discussion and review. Preparation involves some vital steps:

- Review the long range plan, goals and objectives, and project anticipated expenditures in relation to resources.
- Develop a budget calendar with dates for completion.
- Evaluate the prior year's actual line or program costs.
- The librarian presents a budget draft to the full board for changes and adoption. (A sample budget is included at the end of this chapter.)

Presentation

Board members must be prepared to participate in presenting the budget: to explain, to justify, and to negotiate. When the proper time comes, the director should accompany the board to present the budget to the local government officials. Board members should know how funds are used and exactly what is needed in order to explain the budget request clearly. To help "sell" the budget, remember these points:

- Throughout the year, point out the successes, the services and the community's response to the library. Invite city officials to receptions and library activities regularly.
- Offer quality library reference service and assistance to local government officials and departments. Show how indispensable your library is to each of them individually.
- Send copies of letters of appreciation, notice of awards and/or staff accomplishments, and newspaper articles to local government officials.
- Use the Friends of the Library and other community library supporters to help promote the library budget and to speak on the library's behalf.
- Tell the community what they can expect and what the current funding level will accomplish. Prepare brochures, newsletters, newspaper items, television spots, community meetings, etc., to help with promotion.

Presentation is an essential part of the budget process. Every board member must be both ready and willing to meet with local government officials to support, clarify or defend the proposed budget, because local officials must consider each service which is to be provided to the community for the next year. Board members should recognize that their elected officials face many competing and persuasive appeals for the limited funds available.

Implementation

Board members must fulfill their fiscal responsibilities by being aware of the budget implementation and adhering to the budget plan and policies. They may be asked to contribute specific expertise in fiscal management, but their major role is in planning, budgeting and securing funds. The library director and/or bookkeeper are responsible for keeping the trustees informed of budget expenditures. Board members set priorities and review budget implementation, but are not usually involved with the day-to-day financial operations of the library.

What are the sources of library revenue?

Traditionally, public library service has been considered a service of the local government alone, but state and federal government can provide a portion of the funds. Grants from the private sector are also a source of revenue. Every library, as a tax-supported institution, needs more money. It is harder and harder to continue current programs on revenue levels of past years. Library boards and librarians must be creative in meeting their library's financial needs. They must become familiar with all the various sources of support in order to participate fully in the planning for their library's service programs and budget.

Local Government Support

Local levels and sources of funding vary with the local government unit that established or maintains the library. Local sources of revenue for libraries may include:

- General revenue funds.
- Tax levies specifically for library services or buildings.
- Interest on investments.
- Contracts for service with other governmental units.
- Fines and fees.
- Bonds issued for materials or construction.
- Rental of properties owned by the library.

State Aid to Public Libraries

A supplement to local financial support is provided by state aid to public libraries. State aid is appropriated by the Nebraska Legislature and administered by the Nebraska Library Commission. State aid provides a means for the library to upgrade its collections, and to provide services not otherwise possible through local funding alone.

State aid is only a small portion of the library's income and should never be used as a substitute for local tax support. In order to receive state aid, the library must be accredited by the Nebraska Library Commission, must submit an annual statistical report and must meet the maintenance-of-effort requirement. See more information about the requirements at: <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/funding/stateaid>

Federal Funds

Federal funds come primarily from the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), a section of the [Museum and Library Services Act of 2003](#).

The Institute of Museum and Library Services provides funds to the Nebraska Library Commission using a population-based formula. The NLC may use the appropriation to support statewide initiatives and services; they also may distribute the funds through grants or cooperative agreements to libraries in their state.

In addition, a number of Nebraska public libraries have received grants or loans from other federal sources – Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) loans or grants.

Private Sources of Library Funding

Private funds are another supplement to local funding. These funds, like state and federal monies, provide

a means for the library to upgrade its collection or facility or to provide services or programs not otherwise possible through local funding alone. Private funds may come in the form of grants or ongoing commitments from groups such as:

- A Friends of the Library group.
- A library foundation.
- Individual donors.
- Community foundations.
- Nebraska Humanities Council.
- Nebraska Arts Council.
- Corporations and foundations.

Fund-raising Tips:

- Fund-raising can provide money for the library, but it can also be time-consuming for the library staff.
- Fund-raising for big-ticket items may be more successful than raising money for books or for salaries. People like to see the result of their donations.
- Grant-seeking is both an art and a skill. Staff and board members should be alert to workshops and classes designed to provide training in this area.
- Information on grants can be obtained from various foundation directories, periodicals, etc., available through the library, your regional library system, or the Nebraska Library Commission.
- It is essential to remember that funds raised by friends groups and library foundations belong to those groups and are not subject to the same rules and regulations as the tax funds governed by the library board.

Additional Resources: Sample Budgets:

- Northeast Iowa Library Service Area
<http://www.neilsa.org/consulting/budgetsample.html>
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
<http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/te8.html>
- Another great resource to locate more information about the **budget calendar** and **budgets** of **cities, villages, and counties** is the state agency of “Nebraska Auditor of Public Accounts.” It can be accessed at: <http://www.auditors.state.ne.us/>

Sample Budget for Vinnyville Public Library is included on the following page. The monthly expenses for one category is filled out completely to show how the line item budget works.

Categories	Line Item	Amount Budgeted	October 2006	Expended to Date	Amount Remaining	% of Amount Remaining
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Personnel						
	Salaries					
Utilities						
	Electricity	700.00	51.10	51.10	648.90	93 %
	Gas	500.00	15.00	15.00	485.00	97 %
	Telephone/Internet	960.00	72.00	72.00	888.00	93 %
	Water	400.00	25.00	25.00	375.00	94 %
	Trash	450.00	32.00	32.00	418.00	93 %
Supplies						
	Office supplies					
	Processing supplies					
	Cleaning supplies					
Materials						
	Books					
	Periodicals					
	CDs/DVDs					
	Interlibrary loan					
Programming						
	Adult					
	Youth/Teen					
Continuing Education						
	Fees/Mileage/Lodging					
Contracts						
	Insurance (Bldg. etc.)					
	Tech Support					
Equipment						
	Computer/Copier					
Bldg. Maint.						
	Bldg./Yard/Sidewalks					
Totals						

DISCUSSION GUIDE
for
Chapter 8: Budgeting and Funding



Budgeting Basics

- **What documents do we need to assemble BEFORE putting together a budget?**
- **How can we as board members communicate the library's budget needs to our funding source(s) both at budget time and throughout the year?**
- **What are my responsibilities as a library board member to oversee the fiscal operation of the library?**

The library budget includes the total cost of all existing services plus the finances required to move the library forward to meet its goals and objectives. The reality of most library budgets is that all funds are not available from a single source, but must be a combination of tax-supported funding (primary support) and private funding. The library board is responsible for funding library services from all these sources.

By having the following information at hand, library board members can build the best budget, sell budget needs to all funders and remain accountable for library expenditures:

- **Records of expenditures**, from all funding sources, for one complete prior fiscal year and the current fiscal year.
- **The current mission statement and strategic plan**, plus any other documents that reflect goals and objectives set by the library board and library staff.
- **Specifics regarding dates of the fiscal year**, timelines for budget preparation, and forms used by all funding sources.

Not only is it important to gather and organize the essential information concerning the budget, board members also should be prepared to participate in presenting the budget and related activities throughout the year. How can board members become involved?

- **Present the budget together with the library director to the local government officials.** It is important for board members to be ready to communicate the needs of the library and to support, clarify or defend the proposed budget.
- **Invite city/village/county officials to various receptions and library activities regularly.** Perhaps extend an invitation to “host” one of the local government board meetings.
- **Ask and encourage community library supporters such as a Friends of the Library group and others to help promote the library budget by attending any of the local budget hearings and speak on behalf of the library.**

Once the budget is approved by the local government, board members should be knowledgeable about the implementation process of the budget but not to be so involved in the day-to-day financial operations of the library.

******Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are questions about budgeting to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- How can we best determine priorities for the budget and match those priorities with different funding sources?
- Are the reports we receive as a board meaningful and useful in determining if library funds are being spent effectively? If not, how can they be changed?
- How can the board plan for library expansion or the addition of new programs or services in the budget?
- How should we support the library budget to the city council?

Where can we look for additional information related to Budgeting Basics?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *Library Trustees Meeting the Challenge (video)*
- *Making a Case for Your Library: a How-to-Do-It Manual*
- *Managing Budgets and Finances: a How-to-Do-It Manual for Librarians*
- *The Library Trustee: a Practical Guidebook*
- *The Successful Library Trustee Handbook*

Website:

- **Nebraska Auditor of Public Accounts**
<http://www.auditors.state.ne.us/>

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.



CHAPTER 9

Personnel

How can library board members encourage the development of competent library staff?

Personnel are the library's most valuable resource and usually account for the largest portion of the budget. A library must be adequately staffed by competent, well-trained people to guarantee thorough, efficient and high-quality library service to the community. Providing continuing education opportunities for staff is important in this effort and also plays a significant role in the Nebraska Library Commission's accreditation process.

Providing quality library service and planning for service in the future are demanding tasks. To meet these challenges, the Nebraska Library Commission has established a voluntary certification program for librarians. This program describes competencies for public librarians, establishes an initial certification, and sets criteria for ongoing recertification. Directors and board members are encouraged to consider certification for all library staff members.

Library board members promote the continued development of the library staff by encouraging participation in professional associations and attendance at workshops and conferences. Library staff involvement is an important part of accreditation through the Nebraska Library Commission. The board should also consider ways to publicly recognize staff for their efforts. This could be achieved with a notice in the local paper, a presentation or a ceremony noting outstanding achievements.

Trustees individually, and the library board as a whole, have a variety of relationships with personnel. Library trustees support the library's management structure by recognizing that all matters concerning management functions and the day-to-day operation of the library are responsibilities of the library director and his or her staff. Library board members should work with local government to ensure that all necessary personnel rules and regulations are observed.

What is involved in hiring the library director?

The library board is responsible for selecting a qualified and effective library director. The board's selection will have a major impact upon the library's image in the community and on its future successes. Procedures for selecting a library director vary. Trustees must be sensitive to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action provisions in addition to requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The involvement of the board is always important because they are uniquely acquainted with the library and its operations. Once a need to hire becomes apparent, trustees have several responsibilities. They should appraise the situation, draft a job description, advertise and search, hire, and finally conduct an orientation for the new director, followed by an eventual evaluation of job performance. Library board members should keep local officials informed of the selection.

Board members should work with local officials to ensure that all necessary personnel rules and regulations are observed.

How does the library board decide what qualities to look for in a library director?

Board members should make a realistic appraisal of the situation to determine the type of individual needed. They should decide what qualifications the library requires in a director and what the library has to offer the librarian. Trustees should begin with a hard look at the current status of the library. Trustees may also use the library's current strategic plan to assist with this appraisal.

Library board members should address some fundamental questions, such as:

- What is the role of the library in the community today?
- Have library needs changed? Has the library kept pace?
- What does the library board really want or need in the next director?
- What is the reason for the job opening? (An exit interview with the departing director is useful.)

What is an exit interview?

An exit interview is typically performed with an outgoing employee in order to gather data to improve working conditions and retain employees. The exit interview allows library board members to consider reasons why a director is leaving the position. This information may be useful for future personnel or management plans. When conducting the exit interview, board members should consider questions that will help them gain the most useful information.

For example, any of the following questions might be useful in an exit interview:

- Why is the director leaving? Is the person moving toward a higher-ranking position elsewhere? Is the person retiring? Was there something that triggered the director's decision to leave?
- What did the director find the most satisfying about the job?
- What did the director find the least satisfying about the job?
- What would the departing director change about the job?
- Did the director's job duties turn out to be as expected?
- Did the director receive enough training to do the job effectively?
- Did the director receive adequate support to do the job?

Library board members should also consider if the board was satisfied with the previous director's skills and abilities. This may assist the board when interviewing and finally selecting a new director.

What factors in the community should the library board consider when selecting a library director?

In order to select the most appropriate person for the position of director, library board members should consider their community. Factors to consider when assessing library services and community needs include:

- Community size and location.
- Community residents: What are their occupations, recreational habits, educational level, historical and/or ethnic heritage?
- Business community.
- Unique assets and liabilities of the community that might appeal to or discourage applicants.
- Size of library and staff.
- Particular administrative problems that might require particular abilities.

As a result of this assessment, the board may want to redefine the job, elevate the position, and/or revise qualifications and statements of job responsibilities. The selection of a competent library director can be the most important single act undertaken by the board of trustees.

What are some of the qualifications the library board should include in the advertisement?

Using what was learned from the appraisal, the library board should draw up a list of desirable qualifications that can be used to compose a job announcement. These qualifications might include:

- Education level and professional training.
- Previous library experience.
- Managerial skills and previous supervisory experience.
- Strong communication skills.
- Strong computer skills.
- Character traits such as: resourcefulness, enthusiasm, self-confidence, leadership, dependability, genuine interest in working with people of all ages.
- Qualifications that will assist the library in meeting requirements for accreditation.

A sample job description for a library director is included at the end of this chapter. The job announcement for the library director should include:

- Description of the position.
- Starting salary and/or salary range.
- Benefits information.
- Information about the library and community.
- Required education, experience and personal qualities.
- Deadline for application including resume and references submitted to designated trustees.
- Statement of non-discrimination in hiring based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, equal pay and disability.

How widely should the board advertise?

How widely and extensively to recruit for a director is a decision that board members will make after deciding on the desired direction of their library and on the type of individual required. Wide distribution of job opening notices to professional journals and associations may bring applications from many qualified individuals. Sources for job advertisement include the following:

- Major and local newspapers.
- Local library and/or city website.
- Placement departments of library schools.
- Nebraska Library Commission website.
- *American Libraries* (fee).
- *Library Journal* (fee).

While wide recruitment may be time-consuming and even difficult at times, individuals who bring new ideas and points of view to a public library may give remarkable service to a community. Library board members have a responsibility to their community and to their library to search for the best director available.

How is the search conducted?

Library board members should work with local government to ensure that all legal requirements for hiring personnel are followed. A search committee usually consists of board members, but in addition to trustees, the board may want to consider including others, such as:

- A municipal official.
- Members of Friends of the Library or library foundation.
- A community representative.
- A knowledgeable staff representative.

A search committee that represents the full board is the most effective means of hiring a new director. However, other members of the board should have the opportunity to meet the candidates informally, tour the library with them, etc. Depending on the size of the library board, all members may be involved in the search committee.

The search committee should develop a formal interview and selection process to follow. These steps can be part of this process:

- Decide if the board can reimburse all or part of the expenses for the candidate.
- Decide on the number of applicants to be **interviewed--usually** from three to five people.
- Determine the order of preference for interviews and send letters to schedule candidates.
- Check references for potential candidates using a standard form. This standard form may be sent, with a self-addressed, stamped return envelope, to former employers and to references given. A phone call may produce a more candid evaluation, and the standard form can be used during the conversation.
- Plan the location for the interview and accommodations for the candidate.

- Keep the interview team to a reasonable size, usually three to five people.
- Agree on a standard list of questions to be posed to each candidate. Library board members may want to ask staff for suggestions.
- Allow adequate time for discussion. Plan for a tour of the library and community.
- Devise a standard evaluation sheet to be used by the search committee to note the candidates' responses and members' impressions. Allow time between interviews to complete the evaluation sheet while the members' reactions to candidates are still fresh.

After all interviews are completed, the search committee is faced with making its final selection. The selection of a new director is one of the most important decisions library board members can make. To help with this major decision, trustees should remember to:

- Rank the candidates based upon the interview evaluations. Thoroughly discuss each candidate's interview and qualifications. Seek consensus of the search committee.
- Telephone the top candidate to offer the position and let the person consider that decision.
- Follow up with an information letter and/or contract which includes details of the position, duties, salary, benefits, starting date, etc. Include a second copy for the new director's signature and specify a return date indicating acceptance.
- After the acceptance has been finalized, write all of the other candidates interviewed, thanking them and informing them that the position has been filled. If the first candidate selected declines, then consider the other remaining top choices.
- If there are no other candidates at that time that fit the board's requirements, a new search may need to be undertaken.

What is involved in an orientation for the new library director?

Once a new library director has been selected, the individual should be provided with as much information as possible, including the library's strategic plans, budgets, library history and community information. The board of trustees may want to establish time periods at which the board discusses progress with the director and offers assistance and advice.

Remember to:

- Orient the new library director and assist with the person's relocation.
- Provide information on the library, library staff, Friends of the library, library foundation and the community.
- Welcome the new director. News releases and photographic coverage should be arranged with the local newspaper. An open house or reception hosted by the library board is a nice courtesy to consider.

How does the library board evaluate the director?

A probationary period of six months to one year allows time for the board and the library director to develop a working relationship and to evaluate library administration. Library boards are evaluating their library director all the time by what they see in the building and by what they hear from the public and staff. Early in the probationary period, some short- and long-term goals and objectives might be mutually agreed upon.

Midway through the period, it can be helpful if an informal review of the library director's performance is conducted.

The job description itself can be part of the yardstick for measuring performance. A formal evaluation process, to be conducted annually, should be developed by the board. This written evaluation is an essential management practice. The board and the library director can jointly develop a list of factors that lend themselves to objective evaluations.

A formal evaluation will:

- Provide the library director with a clear understanding of the board's expectations.
- Ensure that the library director is aware of how well the expectations of the board are being met.
- Identify the board's concerns, if any, so that appropriate action can be taken.
- Demonstrate sound management practices and accountability to local municipal officials and the community.

The major methods of performance evaluation typically used are those based on:

- Personality and behavioral traits, such as cooperation, initiative, communication, decision-making, creativity and dependability.
- Job description outlining the major areas of responsibility.
- Objectives that have been mutually agreed upon to be accomplished within a specific time frame.

See end of chapter for a librarian evaluation example and links to additional examples.

Contact your regional system administrator for other possible forms. Also consult with local city government as there may be a city form to use.

What is the relationship between library board members and library staff?

The library staff interacts with a wide range of community members, both inside the library and through any outreach services provided. Library board members should recognize that library staff represents the image of the library to community members. They are part of the team that implements the library goals, objectives, and plans for service. Often they are responsible for enforcing board of trustees' policy.

Library board members are encouraged to honor the channels of communication established within their library. For example, if a staff member approaches a trustee with an idea for improving service, or with a complaint, the trustee will listen in a friendly, noncommittal fashion, and then encourage the staff member to present the idea via the library's accepted procedure. Generally, library staff should approach the director first with any ideas or complaints. Your library should have a procedure for reviewing staff manual provisions and gathering staff input on hours, salaries, benefits, etc.

In general, library board members abide by these principles:

- The staff is directed only by the director, who interprets board policies to the staff and carries out the total library program as expected by the board.
- Board members do not give orders or instructions to the staff.

- Board members go to the director if there are any concerns about staff performance.
- Board members' role in the hiring process of staff other than the director is limited to approving job descriptions and personnel policies.
- The board may be the final recourse for employees who have exhausted normal appeals channels.

Additional Resources:

Job Description:

Sample Library Director Job Description

Job Title:

Library Director

Supervised By:

Library Board

Responsibilities:

Responsible for general library operation, supervision of staff, and service to the public. Operate as a link with staff and library board to achieve efficient library operation.

Duties:

- Attend all board meetings except those directly involving library director's salary or change in status of library director. In the latter case the director may choose to have this discussion in a public meeting under Nebraska's Open Meeting Law.
- Supervise staff, make general task assignments, schedule work hours and time off, train new staff members, and maintain atmosphere of cooperation and teamwork.
- Select library materials based on community interests and needs.
- Select materials to be discarded from collection.
- Work with board on preparation of budget.
- Implement library programs, policies and objectives as established by the board.

Certification:

Certification based on the Public Librarian Certification Program.

Skills and Abilities:

- Thorough knowledge of principles and practices of public library services.
- Ability to communicate effectively with fellow staff and delegate duties when appropriate.
- Ability to communicate effectively with a diverse population and work effectively with a variety of patrons.
- Advanced knowledge of computer software and the Internet.
- Ability to plan, organize, and coordinate work routines, scheduling staff as necessary.

- Ability to efficiently manage library funds, both donations and those given by the local government.
- Ability to foster and implement library programs, including outreach efforts, based on community interests and needs.
- Physical stamina, as well as the ability to lift at least 20 pounds, to push and pull both loaded book carts and other library equipment and materials. Physical activity includes, but is not limited to, prolonged periods of sitting, as well as periods of standing, walking, stretching, bending and stooping.

Websites: Sample Evaluation Forms:

- **Library SupportStaff.com Resource page**
<http://librarysupportstaff.com/staffappraise.html>
- **Massachusetts Public Library Trustee Handbook**
http://www.mlin.lib.ma.us/advisory/trustees/trustees_handbook/ch06s07.php
- **Mid Hudson Library System Trustee Resource page**
<http://midhudson.org/trustee/main.htm>

Evaluation Form Example:

Name _____ Evaluation Period _____

Responsibilities	Expectations and Goals	Comments

Overall Performance

Comments

Performance Rating

Employee:

Above Satisfactory _____

Agree: _____

Satisfactory _____

Disagree: _____

Below Satisfactory _____

Signature:

Date:

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for
Chapter 9: Personnel



- How can we as board members encourage the development of skilled library staff?
- What are the board's responsibilities in terms of hiring staff or evaluating staff employment?
- What is the relationship between board members and library staff?

Public library staff members provide a wide range of services for the communities they serve. In order for these services to be effective, library staff must be well-trained. To that end, the Nebraska Library Commission provides a voluntary certification program for library staff. This coursework is offered on a regular basis, and library directors and board members are encouraged to support certification of library staff. Library staff also should be encouraged to participate in professional associations and attend other training opportunities, such as the Nebraska Library Association's annual conference. Membership and/or training costs for library staff should be paid from library budgeted funds. Training and networking for library staff often is essential for the development of new ideas and services for local public libraries.

The library board is responsible for selecting a qualified library director. All other library personnel are hired by the director. In all hiring situations, local government should be consulted to ensure that all necessary personnel regulations are observed. **When hiring a director**, there are several steps that will guide the board in its efforts. These include:

- **Make an appraisal** of the current job/library situation. This could include an exit interview with the departing director.
- **Draft a job description** drawn from the appraisal.
- **Advertise the position** locally, statewide and/or nationally.
- **Interview qualified candidates** based on criteria established in the appraisal and job description.
- **Select and hire the chosen candidate** and provide an orientation for the new director.
- **Eventually complete a job performance evaluation** of the director during the beginning months of employment. This evaluation then becomes an annual responsibility for the library board.

The library director is responsible for supervising, guiding and evaluating library staff. Board members are not responsible for the daily operation of the library and therefore they do not provide any supervision to other library staff. Board members do play a role in approving staff job descriptions and personnel policies. If board members have any concerns about staff performance, those concerns should be taken to the director.

******Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are questions about personnel to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- It has been at least five years since we evaluated our library director. How should we improve this process so that it can be done consistently each year? Which areas of the director's performance should we review and how?
- Our director recently retired. How do we go about finding a replacement?
- What should we be doing to help support the library staff's attendance at continuing education activities?
- How do we work with our local authorities concerning personnel situations?

Where can we look for additional information related to Personnel?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *At the Interview* (video)
- *Avoiding Liability Risk : An Attorney's Advice to Library Trustees and Others*
- *Evaluating the Library Director*
- *Fairness factor. How to Recruit, Interview & Hire to Maximize Effectiveness and Minimize Legal Liability* (video)
- *Neal-Schumann Directory of Public Library Job Descriptions*
- *Sample Evaluations of Library Directors*
- *Trustee of a Small Public Library*
- *We're All in this Personnel Thing Together, Aren't We?* (video w/manual)

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

EVALUATION FORM

Chapter 9: Personnel



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name _____

Public Library _____

7. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.
8. What other topics/information concerning **“Personnel”** would you like to see addressed in this chapter?
9. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?
10. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?
11. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:
12. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No ___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?
7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:
9. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.



THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

CHAPTER 10

Connecting the Library with the Community: Public and Community Relations

Why is the library board's connection to the community important?

Library board members are advocates for the library. It is their responsibility to see that the image of the public library is as positive as it can be. Good public relations do not just happen. It takes time to create a good image for the library.

Board members and the library director should work together in developing a sound public relations policy and action program. Such a program is essential to any library which expects to maintain and increase its community support. Public and community relations can become the means by which the community knows, appreciates and uses the public library to the fullest extent.

What should library boards know about building networks and influencing people?

The library has many communities including patrons, city council, village boards, taxpayers and legislators, to name only a few. These various groups can become part of an effective network of support for the library. Building influence in the community is a three-part process for the board member: lobbying, advocacy and personal promotion of the library.

What is lobbying?

The political process is essentially a process of communication, and lobbying is persuasive communication. Lobbying is a formalized approach to getting library and patron needs before your elected officials. It is still informational, but it is designed to achieve a specific goal. It means getting to know legislators and government officials better, and helping them have a better understanding of how libraries impact their constituents. Use talking points; such as: serving people in rural areas who do not have many of the advantages of living in town; providing Internet and email connections for those who do not have them; providing life-long learning opportunities through the use of the materials and connections to other libraries. The mayor, city council members, village board members, county commissioners, the governor and state legislators must be convinced of the worth of the library in meeting the informational needs of its citizens, as well as its monetary value to the community it serves.

Trustees should also track library issues of local, regional or state concern. As volunteers, they have more freedom to support specific programs.

Here are some tips for communicating with your elected officials:

- Get to know your elected officials before you need to approach them.
- Stay informed. Keep updated on current discussion.
- Call or visit with your elected officials and express your support for or against an issue.
- Tell the people who are part of your network how they can add their support.
- Participate in the annual Nebraska Library Association Legislative Day.

How can a library board member communicate with a national and state legislator?

A prepared “form” letter is rarely effective and should not be used. Stating your message in your own words is much better. Don’t over-burden your legislator with too much information or too many letters.

Letters

The correct style for **national officials** is:

To your **Senator**:

The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

To a **Representative**:

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr./Ms./Mrs. _____

Body of the letter may contain the following elements:

- Statement about what you want.(support or opposition).
- Identify the issue by subject and bill number if you can.
- Explain why the senator should do this. Add personal, people touches.
- Close by restating your request and thank the senator for considering your position.
- Keep it brief. One page is best. Supply any supporting materials separately.
- Offer to answer any questions they may have.

Sincerely yours,

The correct style for corresponding with your **state legislator** is:

Senator _____
District # State Capitol
PO Box 94604
Lincoln NE 68509-4604

Dear Senator:

(Body of letter. See above examples of items to include.)

Sincerely yours,

Always use your full name. Add your official position if you are speaking for an organization; your District # and preferred mailing address are important. A telephone number and/or email address may be included.

Other Forms of Communication:

- Postcards are effective if they express your personal or official position. They may be used to communicate brief messages.
- Email is useful when speed is a matter of consideration. It may not be as effective as other means of communication.
- Telephone calls are useful to establish contact with the official's staff. Staff persons do a lot of the research and keep a tally of opinions expressed by the official's constituents. Get acquainted!

U.S. Senators', U.S. Representatives' and State Senators' addresses are available in the publication, ***Nebraska Unicameral Legislature Roster***. It is published each session and gives local addresses as well as the office addresses of each official. It is available from the Clerk of the Legislature's office, Room 2018, State Capitol, Lincoln, NE 68509-4604.

There are some specific things that library board members cannot do in their official capacity as a board member:

- Unlimited lobbying.
- Polling of candidates and publicizing results.
- Targeted voter registration and "get out the vote" drives.
- Distribution of candidates' positions to influence voters.
- Distribution of candidate-focused material.
- Endorsement of specific candidates.
- Contributing to candidates from public money.

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is an informal approach to building support for the library. It consists of informing community leaders and library patrons of the services, programs and needs of the library. As an integral part of the community, library board members have a unique opportunity to work with other organizations in building networks of mutual support.

Some things library boards can do to help library services and programs become more visible:

- Get involved in community activities – celebrations, social events, school events.
- Offer to help with other organizations' initiatives when it is appropriate.
- Become personally acquainted with reporters/editors—other community “movers and shakers.”
- Serve on committees as an active member of the local Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, Inter-agency councils, or other agencies.
- Place local, regional and state officials on your library's mailing lists.
- Invite government officials to library functions and involve them in your programs.
- Provide a place for an open forum to educate the public on the issues.

Telling the library story never ends. Gather all the facts you can to support the message you wish to tell and use every opportunity to tell it. It is important that once the board has determined what the message is, you all speak with one voice. You have the power to affect attitudes and change minds. Don't try to hide information. Being open with your audience helps build trust and confidence in what you are trying to accomplish. Refer to the end of the chapter for additional resources for advocacy.

What is personal promotion?

This is the most important element in building influence. The personal investment each board member puts into promoting library services is what will make the most difference. People relate to people. It is the board member's task to be a trusted source of information about the library for the community. Board members need to ask the important questions and listen to the answers. The “L” (library) word needs to be heard loudly and often in the marketplace, on the street, in club meetings, at civic functions and in the media.

Friends, Volunteers, and Foundations

Trustees can also encourage the development of Friends of the Library, volunteer programs and/or public library foundations to help connect the library with the community.

What are Friends of the Library organizations?

A Friends of the Library organization is a group of citizens in the community who have a common concern for their library. Its members are interested in a closer relationship between their library and the public it serves. They are independently organized to support, promote, improve and expand their local library through funding, volunteerism and advocacy.

The functions of the Friends of the Library and the library board are not the same and cannot be treated as such by either group. Informed Friends groups and library boards working cooperatively with and through the library director can be of valuable assistance in the total public relations effort of the library.

Why organize a Friends of the Library group?

Friends groups are recognized as among the most important citizen groups in the library world. They benefit libraries by their activities and representation of community needs and interests. They generally are organized with one or more of the following objectives:

- To create public support.
- To encourage gifts, endowments and memorials for the library.
- To provide direct financial assistance by purchasing for the library special items which could not be purchased from the budget.
- To intensify community awareness and use of the library.
- To sponsor programs.
- To aid in public relations.

How are Friends Groups organized?

Essentially a small group of people may resolve that a "Friends of the Library Group" be formed to accomplish certain aims. Sometimes library board members and library director decide to start a group. Regardless of who initiates the formation of the group, careful planning is essential.

Begin by organizing a small steering committee that includes board members, the library director and people with proven concern for the library. The steering committee lays the groundwork for the initial meeting which should be open to the public. They should:

- Set the time and place of the first organizational meeting.
- Have membership blanks stacked by the library checkout desk and extend personal invitations to public officials and special interest groups such as book clubs and service clubs.
- Decide who will be chairman of the first meeting.
- Write a draft of bylaws to be approved and establish goals, objectives, and purpose.

During the first organizational meeting the agenda might include:

- Welcome by a member of the library board.
- Introduction of library director.
- Explanation of the purpose of the Friends group.
- Election of officers including nominations from the floor as well as a list from the nominating committee.
- Review and adoption of bylaws.

A complete set of model bylaws for a Friends of the Library group can be found at the end of the chapter. Another excellent resource is The Friends of Libraries USA (FOLUSA). Refer to the Library Organizations and Associations chapter for more information.

After the meeting, it is a good idea to publicize the formation of the Friends group and announce its officers. The group will want to continue to actively recruit members throughout the community as they form committees and begin to work.

Anyone interested in joining and promoting the library should be welcomed to the Friends of the Library. This may include families, children, local businesses, media representatives, authors or community organizations, to name just a few.

How does the library board work with Friends of the Library?

Friends groups differ from library to library; however, within the library, the Friends group is distinctly separate from the library board and library administrative structure.

The library director must want a Friends group, and the library board must be aware of them. All involved must understand that Friends do not make policy. They exist to promote the library. Often it is from these loyal supporters that board members are chosen. Membership in Friends also is a way for former board members to continue their service.

The library board should assist the Friends group and support its activities by providing leadership in the following ways:

- Developing a policy on Friends and volunteers.
- Working with the library director to draft procedures and regulations relevant to Friends' activities.
- Meeting periodically with the Friends board to plan and define goals for the group and to maintain open communication.
- Inviting and welcoming Friends to library board meetings.

Volunteer Support

Another significant working relationship for the library board is with the volunteers who not only offer their personal time and talents to the library, but also can be some of the library's best advocates. Careful initial discussion and planning can help ensure that a volunteer program will remain healthy and productive. Although volunteers can accomplish many tasks for a library, they simply cannot replace the functions of the trained professional staff. For the larger library seeking ways to cut costs and for the small library that is just a few steps from its volunteer beginnings, there is a temptation to lean on volunteers. For all libraries, however, certain rules apply in the use of volunteers. Volunteers should not supplant or replace established staff positions. Volunteers should not be given work that staff is paid to do.

A volunteer program is most productive when it is planned and approved by the staff and the library board. It should be run according to the best employment practices including training, evaluation and development, with clarity in work descriptions, and expectations of the volunteers.

A successful program will have realistic expectations of hours donated and types of work to be done. It will provide for recognition and appreciation of volunteers. Volunteer duties may include assisting with programming, special projects, outreach services, storyreading, shelf-reading (scanning the shelves for misplaced books) and book mending to name just a few.

Cooperation and support by the library board is vital to a sound volunteer program. Board members should show appreciation for good volunteer assistance.

What is a public library foundation?

A library foundation is a non-profit corporation that exists to provide a link between philanthropists and the library, in order to solicit and receive gifts, bequests, grants and property of any kind, for the use and benefit of the library. The foundation also will hold, manage, operate, sell, exchange, invest, reinvest and generally deal with property that may come into its possession for the use of the library.

The foundation is independent of the library board; however it may include board members and the library director ex-officio. The foundation board will consist of any individuals who are interested in the progress of the library, and those with expertise in financial management.

Why establish a public library foundation?

Nebraska public libraries receive primary funding from the governmental unit - village, town, city, county- whose residents they serve. But many Nebraska libraries find that they would like to purchase a special piece of equipment or special library materials or establish a program beyond the reach of the library's operating budget. Libraries also plan for major capital expenditures such as a building addition, renovation or a new library building, and find that special funding will be needed.

A successful library foundation is a vehicle for the library to receive supplemental funding for such special, one-time expenditures. A library foundation gives the residents of the library's service area an opportunity to show their support of the library through financial contributions of any size including real estate and bequests in wills. A library foundation makes the public library more visible in the community. Through its publicity, it calls attention to the public library as an important institution worth investing in.

What is the relationship between the public library and its foundation?

The public library is a governmental entity. The library foundation is a supporting non-profit private corporation. Whereas monies donated to the public library directly become public monies and as such must fit into the library's budget for the fiscal year, monies donated to the library foundation remain private monies for the support of enhanced public library services. Such monies can be invested for the long term for special purchases and projects that the library would like to undertake.

Foundation money should never be used to replace regular, ongoing expenditures such as operating expenses (salaries, utilities, supplies), regular materials purchases (books, periodicals, non-print items), or routine maintenance. It should be made clear to the governmental entity (village board, city council, county board), of which the public library is a part, that the role of foundation monies is for special

projects only, not expenditures for which the village, town, city or county has been and should continue to be responsible.

It should further be made clear to the governmental entity that the library foundation is a private, non-profit corporation created to support the public library for special purposes. For good public relations, however, the foundation will want to keep the community informed of its assets, activities and successes.

What are the steps to establishing a public library foundation?

The library's board should discuss the formation of the foundation, making sure it is understood what a library foundation is, why it is desirable and what its function will be. The board should then identify one or more board members and/or library staff members who will pursue the formation of a library foundation in the community.

The library board or a committee should discuss the matter of the foundation's governance. How large will its board be? How will board members be chosen? How often will the foundation board meet? Who might be asked to serve on the board? It is important for purposes of communication that the library board be represented on the library foundation board, but it is equally important that the library board not control the library foundation. To do so would negate the idea of the library foundation as a voluntary association of dedicated public library supporters.

The foundation officers will, however, understand the goals and policies of the library and undertake projects that complement and advance the library presence in the community. A library foundation does not have to accept a donation if the conditions for giving are in conflict with the directions and practices of the group or the library.

With the assistance of a local attorney, the library board or a committee should draft articles of incorporation and bylaws for the foundation. It is important that these documents conform with the Nebraska statutes Chapter 21, "Corporations" and the federal tax code so as to qualify under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code. After the articles of incorporation and bylaws have been drafted, two or more incorporators need to be identified along with a registered office (usually the public library). The articles of incorporation are then prepared, signed and dated. They are sent to the Nebraska Secretary of State's office with a filing fee. A legal notice must appear for three successive weeks in the local newspaper which announces the formation of the new private, non-profit corporation. The library foundation, having met all state requirements for its establishment, will need to furnish the Secretary of State's office a biennial report and pay a biennial fee.

The library foundation, having become legally established, will need to convene its board of directors and elect a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. The treasurer will then be directed to file for 501 (c)(3) status with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. Once this status has been achieved, the foundation will be in position to solicit and accept gifts on behalf of the library allowing library supporters to receive full credit on their tax returns.

The library foundation should develop a brochure or information sheet, making its existence known to the community and encouraging giving by the public.

For more information concerning the establishing of Friends groups or public library foundations, contact your regional library system administrator or the Nebraska Library Commission.

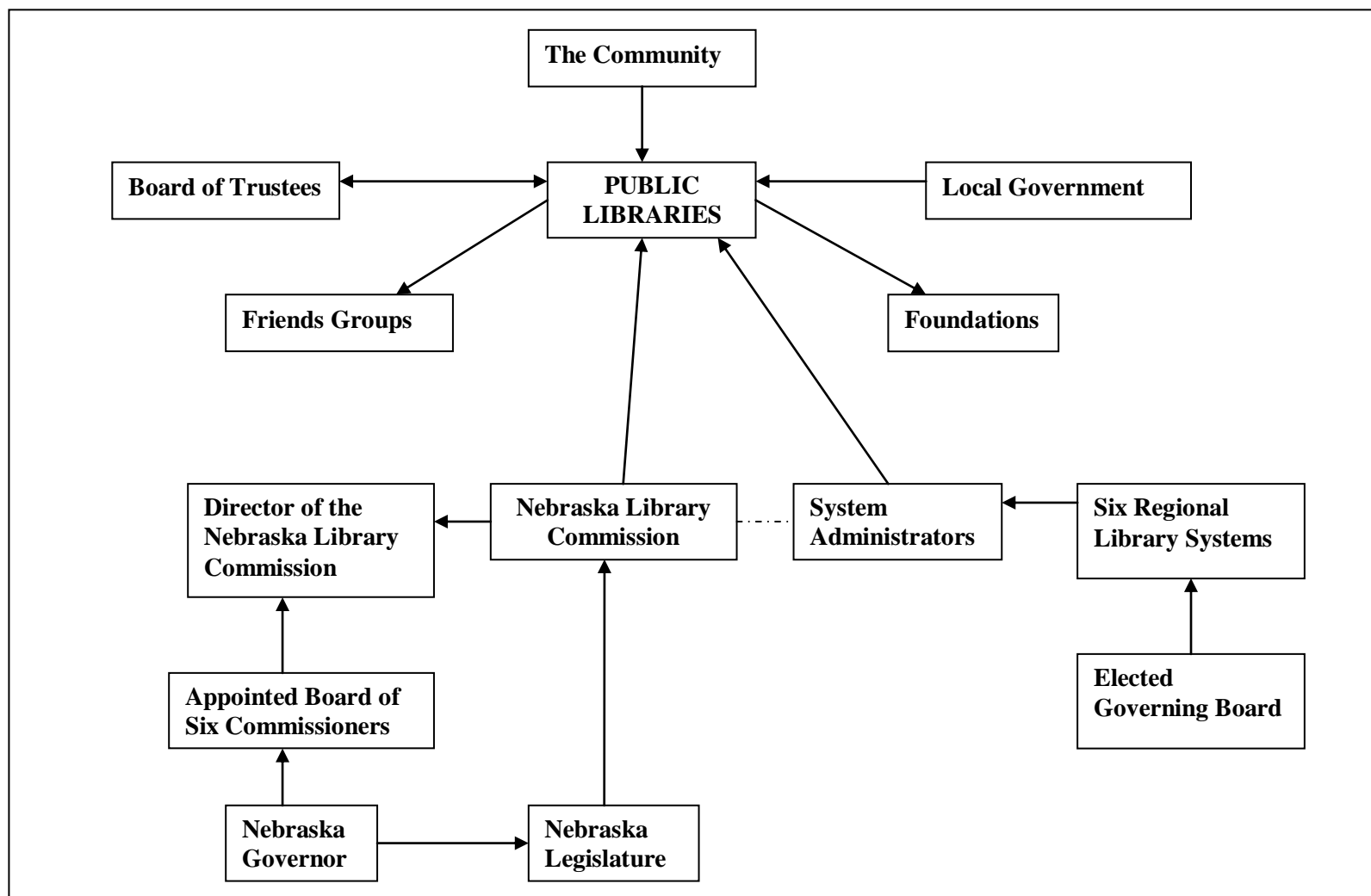
What is the Nebraska Community Foundation?

The Nebraska Community Foundation, headquartered in Lincoln, is a nonprofit, charitable organization providing financial management, strategic development and education/training services to communities, organizations and donors throughout Nebraska since 1993. The Foundation provides affiliated fund status (allowing communities or organizations to achieve nonprofit charitable status without forming their own nonprofit corporation). Visit the foundation's website for more information at: www.nebcommfound.org.

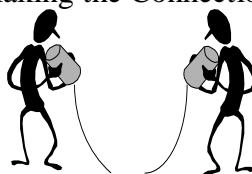
Additional Resources: Advocacy: Websites:

- **American Library Association**
<http://www.ala.org>.
- **Association of Library Trustees & Advocates**
[http:// www.ala.org/alta](http://www.ala.org/alta)
- **Friends of the Library, USA**
<http://www.folusa.com>
- **Nebraska Library Commission**
[http:// www.nlc.state.ne.us](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us).
- **Regional library systems**
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/system/>
- **Unicameral Update:** www.unicam.state.ne.us/update/ (This can also be obtained at no cost by calling 402-471-2877. It is only published while the Unicameral is in session.)

Public Libraries and Connections



Making the Connections



DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 10: Connecting the Library with the Community: Public and Community Relations



Friends Groups

- What are Friends of the Library groups? How do you establish a Friends group?
- Could a Friends of the Library group help us with the visibility of the library in the community?
- What kinds of activities do Friends do, and how will people be able to distinguish library trustees from Friends?
- How is a Friends group different from a Library Foundation?

Effective Friends groups can be a tremendous asset to the library and ultimately to the community by increasing the visibility of the library, by offering opportunities for citizens to contribute to their library, and by providing a sense of fun related to the library. Here are a few general points about Friends groups and about their related collaborative activities with the local library, library staff and trustees.

- **Friends are citizens interested in providing support for the library's programs and services.** They are volunteers who work with the local library staff and trustees to find out how the Friends could help to provide grassroots support of some programs and/or services. Friends groups are limited only by the imaginations of their members and of course by the charge under which they operate.
- **Friends usually have their own 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) and are registered with the Nebraska Secretary of State's office or they also can be under the "umbrella" of another group with this designation such as a local community foundation.** This gives them official recognition and allows people to make donations that have certain tax advantages.
- **While Friends have an organizational structure,** they strive to do things (e.g., book sales, summer reading-related activities for kids, auctions) that will provide monies or other support that will enhance the library's basic services.
- **Sometimes Friends members in the future might want to become a member of the library board.** These individuals would bring with them useful knowledge from their Friends activities to assist with planning of programs and services.
- **Library foundations, while sometimes functioning under the same 501 (c)(3) "umbrella" organizational structure as the library friends group, have a different purpose.** A library foundation usually is established to provide the library with a means of raising significant sums of money (or other support such as securities, stocks, trusts) for major activities such as library construction/renovation, other large capital projects such as a new computer system, or providing an endowment for future library needs or enhancements. The activities of foundations, then, are usually planned toward more financial matters and related fund-raising activities and less toward more visible activities such as a Friends group might provide.

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What kinds of activities do Friends usually sponsor for public libraries?

There is the traditional book sale, although some **Friends** groups sponsor a continuous book sale in the library with a specific area set aside for display of books. Here are some other possible activities:

- Establishment of a Teen Friends group
- Literacy programs, Read-a-Thons, Book and Author Events
- Collaborative Community Events

****** Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are some questions about “Friends” to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- Do we have a Friends group? If so, how do we make sure that we work collaboratively? If we don't have a Friends group, should we, and how do we assist with initiating interest?
- What are some program and service areas that could benefit from the supplemental support of a local Friends group?
- How do we effectively communicate our needs with an established Friends group or other community members?

Where can we look for additional information related to “Friends?”

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *101+ Great Ideas for Libraries and Friends*
- *The Essential Friends of Libraries: Fast Facts, Forms, and Tips*
- Series of videotapes entitled, *Friends Indeed*, made several years ago by Nebraska Library Association and the Nebraska Library Commission covering: organizing a Friends group, fund-raising on the web, “fun”draising ideas, revitalizing a group, and Friends as advocates.
- *Friends of Libraries Sourcebook*
- *Making Friends : Organizing Your Library's Friends Group* (video)

Websites:

- **Friends of Libraries, USA**
<http://www.folusa.com>

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 10: Connecting the Library with the Community: Public and Community Relations



Advocacy

- What is advocacy?
- Why should we advocate?
- How do we advocate?

Advocacy is an informal approach to building support for the library. It consists of informing community leaders and library patrons of the services and programs and needs of the library. Advocacy is one of the essential responsibilities of a library board. The one word that really best describes this activity is **visibility**.

How can a board member advocate effectively?

- **Listen more than talk.** Attend local government meetings to better understand the issues the city is dealing with.
- **Ask the right kinds of questions.** Ask your customers about their concerns for today and the future, not necessarily just what the library can do for them.
- **Gather all the facts you can.** Taking care of all the research ahead of time can help to support the message the board wants to tell.
- **Get out and about. Be seen throughout the community.** Attend and/or become involved in celebrations, social activities and/or school events. It provides the community with an opportunity to see the library beyond its four walls. And it provides the board member with an opportunity to “toot” the library’s “horn,” and also network with community members to listen to their needs. It might also provide community members with opportunities to ask questions about what is going on at the library.

What are some of the specific activities that board members can do to help make the library more visible?

- **Invite government officials to special library events and/or programs.** Perhaps the mayor or a city council/village board member could be a “guest reader” for one of the storytimes, or ask if the library could host one of the local government meetings.
- **Become an active member of one of the service clubs (e.g. Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.) in the area.** Establish relationships within the organization so that there will be a better understanding of what the local library can offer, and what its needs are.
- **Add the names of local, regional, and state officials to any of the library’s mailings.** Newsletters, brochures and/or flyers can help to inform officials of current and future activities, services and programs at the library.
- **Establish and support policies that encourage the use of the library as a place for an open forum to educate community members on public issues.**

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******Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are questions about advocacy to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- We need to get “out and about” in the community. How do we do that?
- How do we do a better job of finding out the needs of our community members?
- What kind of presentation should we put together for one of the local service club meetings? What should we include in the presentation?
- A nearby library just hosted a public forum about the proposed highway project. I think it’s a great idea. How can we do something similar?

Where can we look for additional information related to Advocacy?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *An Advocate’s Guide to the Media*
- *Funding Game: Rules for Public Library Advocacy*
- *Library Advocacy Now!* (video)
- *Library Advocacy Power Tools*
- *Manual for Community Library Advocacy*
- *Successful Library Trustee Handbook*

Websites:

- **American Library Association**
<http://www.ala.org>
- **Association of Library Trustees & Advocates**
<http://www.ala.org/alta/>
- **Friends of Libraries, USA**
[http:// www.folusa.com](http://www.folusa.com)
- **Nebraska Library Commission**
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us>
- **Nebraska Regional Library Systems**
[http:// www.nlc.state.ne.us/system/](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/system/)

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.



EVALUATION FORM

Chapter 10: Connecting the Library with the Community: Public and Community Relations

We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name_____

Public Library_____

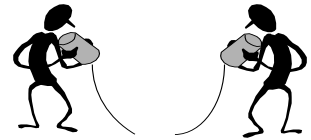
13. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.
14. What other topics/information concerning “**Connecting the Library with the Community: Public and Community Relations**” would you like to see addressed in this chapter?
15. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?
16. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?
17. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:
18. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No ___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?
7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:
10. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.

THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL

CHAPTER 11

Library Organizations and Associations



How can library board members and librarians network with library board members and librarians from other libraries?

Association with national, regional and state organizations and associations benefits Nebraska's library staff and boards by providing educational and promotional programs designed for Nebraska public library board members. Memberships in professional associations foster the sharing of problems and solutions, innovative ideas and resource information not only among trustees but also between trustees and librarians.

What are some national organizations that board members might be interested in joining?

The following national library organizations offer information and materials that provide assistance to library staff and board members.

The [American Library Association](#) (ALA) is the national association for librarians, library board members and others interested in library concerns. ALA sponsors national conferences every summer and winter. It publishes books and journals on professional issues. The Washington office of ALA is an advocate for national library-related issues and concerns.

American Library Association
50 E. Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 944-6780

ALA Washington Office
110 Maryland Avenue, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 547-4440

Publication: *American Libraries*
Website: www.ala.org/

The Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA) is the division of ALA devoted to the concerns of library trustees. ALTA sponsors programs at the national ALA conferences.

Publication: *The Voice*
Website: www.ala.org/alta

The [Public Library Association](#) (PLA) is the division of ALA which provides educational services for public librarians. PLA sponsors its own national conferences as well as programs at the ALA conferences.

Publication: *Public Libraries*

Website: www.pla.org

Friends of Libraries U.S.A. (FOLUSA) is a membership organization of more than two thousand individual and group members. Its mission is to motivate and support local Friends groups across the country in their efforts to preserve and strengthen libraries.

Friends of Libraries U.S.A.
1420 Walnut St. Ste. 450
Philadelphia, PA 19102-4017
(800) 936-5872

Publication: *FOLUSA News Update*

Website: www.folusa.com

Email: friends@folusa.org

What are some of the regional organizations that might be of interest to board members?

The **Mountain Plains Library Association** (MPLA) is an association of library personnel in a 12-state region that includes Nebraska, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. Organized in 1948, MPLA provides an annual conference held in a different state each year. It offers professional development grants for library staff and trustees to attend continuing education activities. MPLA is governed by an elected board of representatives from each member state and a number of sections and roundtables representing interests and types of libraries. In addition to its board and its officers, MPLA activities are carried out by a number of committees and an executive secretary.

The current Executive Secretary's name and contact information is located on the MPLA website:

Publication: *MPLA Newsletter*

Website: www.mpla.us

How can library board members connect with others within the state?

Several organizations within Nebraska provide assistance to library board members. These organizations offer activities related to local board member interests. They offer the opportunity to work with board members from libraries across the state.

The [Nebraska Library Association](#) (NLA) is the professional association for librarians, trustees and interested persons in Nebraska. NLA supports and promotes all libraries, library media centers and library services in the state. Its foremost concerns are the professional development of its members, library advocacy and open access to information for all citizens. NLA is a member of MPLA and ALA.

NLA is divided into six sections and three round tables. These reflect the diverse interests of its membership. NLA sponsors an annual fall conference. It supports a lobbyist to represent library legislative interests at the state level. The committees and sections of NLA offer an opportunity to be involved in library activities and issues beyond the trustee's own library.

The **Trustees, Users and Friends Section** (TUFS), a division of NLA, provides educational and promotional opportunities designed particularly for Nebraska public library trustees. TUFS sponsors statewide workshops in library leadership, regional training workshops and programs at NLA conferences. The Nebraska Library Board Manual and other resources for trustees are made possible through funding and grants secured by TUFS. A Trustee Citation Award is given annually to a trustee who has made a significant contribution in the advancement of library service within and/or outside the community.

See the NLA website for a full listing of NLA sections and other opportunities.

Publication: *Nebraska Library Association Quarterly*

Website: www.nebraskalibraries.org/

What types of services does the Nebraska Library Commission offer to board members and librarians?

The mission of the Nebraska Library Commission is statewide promotion, development and coordination of library and information services.

The Library Commission is governed by a board of six commissioners, appointed by the Governor.

As a state library agency, the Commission is an advocate for the library and information service needs of all Nebraskans. In meeting its mission, the Nebraska Library Commission has four major goals:

- Nebraska library personnel will have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to provide quality library and information services for all Nebraskans.
- All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services.
- Nebraska libraries will have appropriate technology to access and deliver online library and information services.
- Eligible Nebraskans will have access to Talking Book and Braille Services.

Nebraska Library Commission programs and services that support library development include:

- Continuing education programs and activities for library board members and library personnel.
- Collection of books, governmental documents, periodicals, and audiovisual materials available for use by trustees and library staff.
- Administration of public library accreditation and certification programs.
- Statewide summer reading program.
- Grant and state aid programs for public libraries.
- Statewide readers' advisory and delivery service of materials in recorded and Braille formats to Nebraskans who experience visual, or other physical conditions which limit their use of regular print.
- State and federal government publications.
- Online access to journals, magazines, newspapers, genealogy and business information.

A 21 member State Advisory Council on Libraries meets quarterly. It reviews major Library Commission programs, federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) plans, and funding and library aid requests.

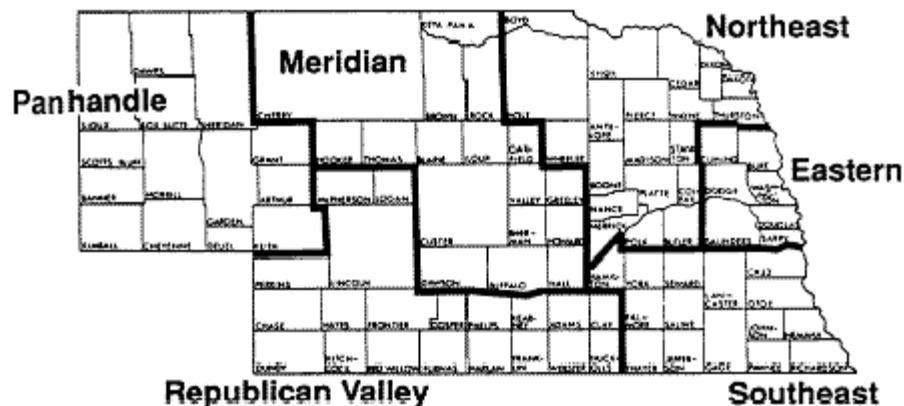
Publication: *NLCommunicator*

Website: www.nlc.state.ne.us

What are the Nebraska regional library systems and how can they be of assistance to board members and librarians?

Nebraska has six regional library systems established to assist all types of libraries and media centers within their regions.

Nebraska Library Systems



Each system is managed by an administrator and an elected board of directors. The system boards operate, develop and implement a plan of services to meet the needs of the libraries within their systems. Active participation by trustees in system boards and committees support the effective development of system services.

All library systems provide consultation, training and promotional activities. Each system also provides additional services appropriate for the needs of its member libraries. Those services may include:

- Cooperative purchasing
- Rotating collections, bulk loans and other special collections
- Special programming

System services are supported by state and federal funds from the Nebraska Library Commission. For more information about library systems contact the regional library system office in your area or the Nebraska Library Commission.

Link to the website of the regional library systems to find specific information about each system:

<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/system/index.html>

Eastern Library System

11929 Elm Street, Suite 12
Omaha, NE 68144
PH: 402-330-7884
800-627-7884
FAX: 402-330-1859

Eastern Newsletter: ***Eastern Express***

Northeast Library System

3038 33rd Avenue, Suite 13
Columbus, NE 68601-2334
PH: 402-564-1586
800-578-1014
FAX: 402-564-7977

Northeast Newsletter: ***Straight Talk***

Republican Valley Library System

2727 West 2nd Street
Suite 233
Hastings, NE 68901
PH: 402-462-1975
800-569-4961
FAX: 402-462-1974

Republican Valley Newsletter: ***VALLEYTALK***

Meridian Library System

3519 Second Avenue, Suite B
Kearney, NE 68847
PH: 308-234-2087
800-657-2192
FAX: 308-234-4040

Meridian Newsletter: *Meridian Monitor*

Panhandle Library System

1517 Broadway, Suite 129
Scottsbluff, NE 69361
PH: 308-632-1350
888-879-5303
FAX: 308-632-3978

Panhandle Newsletter: *Panhandle Sun*

Southeast Library System

5730 R. Street
Suite C-1
Lincoln, NE 68505
PH: 402-467-6188
800-288-6063
FAX: 402-467-6196

Southeast Newsletter: *SoLiS*

DISCUSSION GUIDE
for
Chapter 11: Library Organizations and Associations



- **Where can I turn for help beyond my board; beyond my library?**
- **Why should I join a professional organization?**
- **What help can I get from the Nebraska Library Commission (NLC)?**
- **What are the Library Systems?**

Library board members interested in doing an effective job will recognize the value of constantly improving their knowledge through national, regional and state associations. Board members may sometimes be hesitant about memberships in professional groups because they feel the leadership is composed primarily of librarians. However, one of the many attributes a trustee needs to cultivate is the conviction that trustees are professionals, too.

The following national, regional and state associations provide a number of different continuing education opportunities, resources and publications for library board members:

National

- **American Library Association (ALA)**
 - Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA)
 - Public Library Association (PLA)
- **Friends of Libraries, U.S.A. (FOLUSA)**

Regional

- **Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA)**

State

- **Nebraska Library Association (NLA)**
 - Trustees, Users, and Friends Section (TUFS)

Becoming a member of the NLA and TUFS will enable library board members to have access to leadership training, regional workshops and an annual fall conference, besides providing opportunity for networking with library and media centers across the state. Membership will allow you to keep up with current library news and events through the NLA electronic mailing list and *NLAQ* newsletter and you will be eligible to participate in the offices and committees of NLA, should you choose to do so. Membership applications are available online.

The Nebraska Library Commission and the six Nebraska regional library systems are organizations that also offer networking, support, resources and educational opportunities for library board members.

- **Nebraska Library Commission** is a state agency established to promote, coordinate and develop improved library services. It provides a number of programs and services available for library staff and board members: continuing education materials and activities; books, governmental documents, periodicals and audiovisual materials; online access to journals, magazines and newspapers; and grant and state aid programs for public libraries.
- **Regional library systems** are supported by state and federal funds from the Commission and are established to assist all types of libraries and media centers within their regions. Each system is managed by an administrator and a board of directors operating to provide consultation, training and promotional activities. Libraries within each system also may enjoy cooperative purchasing, rotating collections, bulk loans and special programming.

******Chat for Continuing Education Credits******

Here are questions about library organizations and associations to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- How can we become more involved in our state association, especially TUFs?
- How should we budget for board member participation in a professional association?
- Which publications from the various national and regional associations should we be reading?

Where can we look for additional information related to Library Organizations and Associations?

Websites:

- **Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA)**
<http://www.ala.org/alta>
- **Friends of Libraries, U.S.A. (FOLUSA)**
<http://www.folusa.com>
- **Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA)**
<http://www.mpla.us>
- **Nebraska Library Association**
<http://www.nebraskalibraries.org>
- **Nebraska Library Commission**
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us>
- **Nebraska Regional Library Systems**
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/system>

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

EVALUATION FORM
Chapter 11: Library Organizations and Associations



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name_____

Public Library_____

19. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.
20. What other topics/information concerning “**Library Organizations and Associations**” would you like to see addressed in this chapter?
21. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?
22. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?
23. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:
24. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No ___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?
7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:
11. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.

THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL



CHAPTER 12

Advisory Boards

What is an advisory board?

Some public libraries in Nebraska in cities of the first class are organized under Chapter 16 (16-251) of the *Nebraska Revised State Statutes* and have library boards selected in accordance with local ordinances. These boards are advisory rather than administrative. Advisory boards recommend policies and regulations, but final administrative authority rests with the city manager/administrator and city council. The board president and library director need to check with the elected officials and local ordinances of their community to verify the status of the library's board, whether it is advisory or governing (administrative).

An advisory library board is appointed by the governing body of which the library is a unit. The duties and responsibilities of the advisory board vary with the laws and ordinances under which the library was created. In most instances, the advisory board acts as a liaison between the community and the governing body to promote the library's services and programs. Some library boards incorporate some of the responsibilities of a governing board and some of an advisory board—a hybrid mix that has evolved to best serve their communities.

How can an advisory board be productive?

An advisory board fulfills an important role by providing an avenue for public participation in planning library policies and services. Thus, the public that the library serves can contribute ideas and define problems. Also, library plans get a boost from participation and understanding by citizens. An advisory board that accepts responsibility for giving advice should be prepared to:

- Meet regularly and participate actively in these meetings.
- Share plans and problems and ask for ideas.
- Accept special assignments (for example, to collect community information).
- Plan for the board's participation in the planning process, the work of financing, and the excitement of making future plans.
- Be active in the community to promote the library.
- Be active in the political process that works for legislation and support at local, state and national levels.
- Help identify people in the community who will be active in support of the library.
- Keep informed of the latest development in library service and see that the local library does not lag behind.
- Seek support from governing bodies.

An active advisory board has the opportunity to be involved and influential in library development without the responsibility of operational details.

What is the role of an advisory board member?

The principal role of an advisory board is to make informed recommendations to elected officials (e.g., mayor and city council).

Your job is to know:

- Your responsibilities.
- The services and resources available in the library.
- Your local government and its officials.
- The people in your community.
- How to work effectively in a group.
- The services and resources available in other libraries in your community.
- The system of which your library is a member: the responsibilities and privileges incurred by membership.

To remember:

- That daily operations of the library are the library director's responsibility.
- That working through the library director -not the rest of the staff - is the appropriate method for effecting change.
- That your personal opinion is important in board meetings, but that you must support library policies once they are decided.

To attend:

- Board meetings.
- Committee meetings.
- Nebraska Library Association and American Library Association meetings whenever possible.
- Other local meetings where your presence may be beneficial to the library.

To plan:

- Future growth and priorities of the library.
- Active community awareness programs.
- Orientation for new board members.

To support:

- Your library and its policies.
- Your local governing body.
- The public and its right to information.
- Intellectual Freedom.

To act:

- To articulate your library's needs.
- To promote your library whenever appropriate.
- To develop good personal relations with local, state and federal representatives of government.
- To make yourself, your board and your library visible in the community.

What is the relationship between the advisory board and the library director?

The library board and the library director work as a team to achieve the best for the library, but each has separate responsibilities.

What are the duties of the advisory board?

The library board is appointed by the city council or other governing entity to serve as a liaison between the library and its citizens. The board advises the library director and the city council in matters related to the library and its services and promotes the library and its programs.

The advisory board's duties and responsibilities include:

- Acting in an advisory capacity to the city council in matters that pertain to the library.
- Receiving suggestions and recommendations from citizens relating to library service.
- Referring complaints, compliments and suggestions to the library director, who reports to a chief executive officer, who reports to the city council.
- Knowing how the library is organized and functions.
- Knowing the collection, the staff and the activities of the library in order to communicate with the citizens and the city council.
- Recognizing that the library director and others on the staff are professionals in the field of librarianship and respect their expertise.
- Remembering that advising is not deciding: Your role is to recommend to the city council.
- Supporting Intellectual Freedom and rights to access in the public library.

What are the duties of the library director?

The library director is responsible for the organization, planning, direction and administration of library services and activities to provide quality library service. The director works with the advisory board, as well as other groups, to promote the library.

The library director's duties and responsibilities include:

- Meeting with the library board at regularly scheduled meetings.
- Helping prepare the agenda with the board chair.
- Keeping the board informed of the activities, acquisitions, and new personnel of the library.
- Educating and informing the board regarding budget and financing implications.
- Guiding the board with the development of library policies.
- Directing the care and maintenance of the library building and equipment.
- Supervising the selection, training and performance of the library staff.
- Preparing the annual budget proposal.
- Overseeing the expenditures of the budget.
- Assuming the responsibility for the monthly and annual reports of library service and activities.
- Attending meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences of organizations that are appropriate to the library and management fields.
- Supervising selection and processing of all library materials and equipment.
- Keeping informed of library trends through professional reading.
- Supervising collection development-selection and weeding of library materials.
- Promoting the library, its materials and programming via cable television, radio stations, newspapers, city newsletters, library calendars, brochures, pamphlets and displays.

A special thanks to the Texas State Library for granting permission to use parts of the publication, ***Public Library Advisory Board Handbook***, Texas State Library, Library Development Division, 1992.

Additional Resources: Advisory Boards:

Books (Available for request from the Nebraska Library Commission. Regional system offices might also have copies available):

- ***The Library Trustee: A practical guidebook***. 5th edition. by Virginia G Young
- ***The Library Trustee and the Public Librarian: Partners in Service***. by Lorraine M. Williams
- ***Public Library Advisory Board Handbook***. edited by Alvin R. Bailey.
- ***Working with Library Boards: A how-to-do-it manual for librarians***. by Gordon S. Wade

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for

Chapter 12: Advisory Boards



- **What is an advisory board?**
- **What is the role of an advisory board member?**
- **What are the duties of an advisory board?**

Some public libraries in Nebraska have advisory boards, rather than administrative/governing boards. In cities of the first class, city council has the option of having advisory or administrative/governing library boards. Advisory boards explore and recommend library policies, but the final authority to make such decisions rests with the city manager/administrator and/or the city council. Normally, the advisory board serves as a liaison for the library between the local community and local government. A number of library boards incorporate some of the responsibilities of a governing board and some of an advisory board—a hybrid mix that has evolved to best serve their communities.

In order to make informed recommendations to local government officials, **advisory board members should have knowledge of:**

- **Current** library services and resources.
- **Local government staff** and elected officials.
- Local **community residents**.
- **Any library services** provided by other community libraries.
- How to **work effectively** in a group.

The advisory board's main duties include:

- **Providing recommendations** regarding library matters to the local government officials
- **Receiving suggestions** for library service from community members.
- **Referring complaints, suggestions, compliments** to the library director.
- **Understanding the role** of the library director and staff in providing library services.
- **Supporting intellectual freedom** rights.
- **Promoting the library** at appropriate times.
- **Developing good working relationships** with local government officials.

While advisory boards do not set policy, they provide important links to the library for both the community and local government. Advisory board members should strive to support and promote the library and its services in a positive and effective manner.

Here are questions about advisory boards to discuss at a regular library board meeting. Each board member participating can earn 1 hour of continuing education credit for board certification. Remember to notify the NLC Continuing Education Coordinator about your CE activities.

- Since we are not a governing board, how can we be involved in the decision-making process of the budget?
- How can we promote the library to the community?
- We recently had an intellectual freedom challenge come up in our library. Since we are an advisory board we let the city take care of the concern. The book was removed from the collection. As an advisory board do we have any responsibility to be involved in this kind of matter? And if so, what should we have done differently?

Where can we look for additional information related to Advisory Boards?

(Please note that all books and videotapes are available for request by library staff and/or library board members from the Nebraska Library Commission. Some regional library system offices might also have some of the sources available.)

- *Alabama Public Library Trustee Manual*
- *For Library Directors Only: Talking about Trustees; For Library Trustees Only: Living with Your Director*
- *Library Trustee: a Practical Guidebook*
- *Massachusetts Public Library Trustee Handbook*
- *Montana Public Library Trustee Handbook*
- *Public Library Advisory Board Handbook*

Websites:

- “Nebraska Laws Pertaining to Libraries & Library Operations”
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/liblaws>
- “Public Library Advisory Board Handbook”
<http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/plant/index.html>

Remember to contact your regional library system office or the Nebraska Library Commission if you need any assistance.

EVALUATION FORM
Chapter 12: Advisory Boards



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name _____

Public Library _____

25. Do you feel the topics covered in this chapter are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.
26. What other topics/information concerning “**Advisory Boards**” would you like to see addressed in this chapter?
27. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?
28. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?
29. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:
30. Is the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No ___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?
7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:
12. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.

THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY BOARD MANUAL



GLOSSARY: Library Terms and Acronyms

ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES

Public Library Accreditation Guidelines developed as a standard for Nebraska's public libraries. They were revised in 2004 with three different levels: essential, enhanced and excellent. Refer to Chapter 5.

ACQUISITIONS

Process of obtaining books and other materials for the library collection; also, the books and other materials added to the library collection.

ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

Group of library board members responsible for the employment and evaluation of library director; adoption of written policies to govern the operation and programs of the library; communication and promotion of library services to a variety of stakeholders; and adoption and maintenance of the budget. Most of the libraries in Nebraska have administrative or otherwise known as governing boards.

ADVISORY BOARD

Group of library board members that makes recommendations concerning the library's services among other topics. The administrative authority for this type of library board rests with the city administrator/manager and the city council/village board.

ADVOCACY

The process and action of promoting and communicating the importance and value of libraries and their services to the public, and to local, state and federal elected officials.

ALA

American Library Association. National organization founded in 1876 to promote library service and librarianship. ALA provides a variety of resources for libraries, staff, and trustees.

ALTA

Association for Library Trustees and Advocates. The division of the American Library Association (ALA) dedicated to providing resources, programs, publications and services to America's public library trustees and advocates.

BIBLIOSTATTM COLLECT

Public librarians submit their statistical information annually to a website from which local and national library data are compiled. Statistical information about other public libraries can be accessed through a companion web resource called BibliostatTM Connect.

CHIRS

Consumer Health Information Resource Service. This service operates out of the McGoogan Library of Medicine at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) and provides health information for Nebraska residents free of charge. Access to this program can be initiated through the local public library.

CERTIFICATION

The Library Commission's certification programs are intended to encourage librarians and trustees to develop, maintain and enhance their skills and knowledge through a variety of professional development activities. Library board certification and librarian certification are required for any level of public library accreditation.

CIPA

Children's Internet Protection Act. It is federal legislation that became law in December 2000. Any public library or school that receives federal funding (E-rate or LSTA) related to the purchase of Internet access and/or computer hardware for Internet access has to install filtering software on computers.

CIRCULATION

The process of lending library materials to patrons for use outside the library.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

A planned process of selecting and acquiring library materials to meet the needs of a library's community.

COPYRIGHT

Copyright is a right of intellectual property, whereby authors retain, for a limited time, certain exclusive rights to their works. In the United States, copyright is exclusively federal law, and derives from the "copyright clause" of the Constitution (Art. 1, sec. 8, cl. 8), which provides Congress with the power "to promote science and the useful arts by securing for limited times to authors...the exclusive right to their ...writings." Copyright involves all type of formats of materials from print to electronic.

DATABASE

Organized electronic collection of information.

DEPOSITORY LIBRARY

A library designated to receive all or part of the publications of federal, state or local governments.

ELS

Eastern Library System. Serves seven counties in eastern Nebraska and has an office in Omaha. The regional library system provides continuing education, consulting and cooperative activities and services to regional system member libraries.

E-MAIL

Electronic mail. It is a system of sending and receiving messages through a computer via the Internet.

E-RATE

Education rate discounts for telecommunication and Internet services for public libraries and schools.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Part of a regular public library board meeting that is not open to the public possibly due to the discussion of personnel, real estate transactions and/or other related issues. Refer to Nebraska State Statute, 84-1410 for more details.

FOLUSA

Friends of Libraries USA. National membership organization that provides a variety of resources and support for Friends of Libraries groups across the United States.

FRIENDS GROUP

An organized 501(c)(3) entity consisting of local citizens who are interested in providing support of a library's programs and services through grassroots fund-raising activities.

GOLDEN SOWER AWARDS

Nebraska literature awards are voted on by Nebraska school children and given annually in three categories: K-grade 3, grades 4-6, and young adult.

GOVERNING BOARD (See Administrative Board)**HTML**

Hyper-text Markup Language. The language used to create Internet Web pages.

HOMEPAGE

The first page a user sees at an Internet website.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

The right of individuals to exercise their freedom of inquiry, exclusive of invasion of privacy. This right is supported by the American Library Association, the Nebraska Library Association, the Nebraska Library Commission and individual libraries through their commitment to the Library Bills of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement as the rationale upon which librarians should serve the people.

ILL

Interlibrary Loan. The process of loaning material from one library to another.

INTERNET

A global network of computer networks.

LEAGUE OF NEBRASKA MUNICIPALITIES

A nonprofit association formed to represent the interests of cities and villages in Nebraska. The 15- member board consists of statewide representation of mayors, clerks and council members.

LENDER COMPENSATION

Nebraska libraries that lend more library material through OCLC to other Nebraska libraries than they borrow receive compensation for that activity.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (LC)

The Library of the United States Congress; due to its resources and leadership, LC has assumed the role of a national library.

LIBRARY SYSTEMS (see SYSTEMS)**LSTA**

Library Services and Technology Act. The federal funds for library services allocated by Congress and distributed to states annually to address the goals of LSTA according to each state's long range plan. LSTA funds are administered in Nebraska by the Library Commission.

MARC

Machine Readable Cataloging. It is the international standard format for the storage and exchange of bibliographic data (catalog cards) in computerized library catalogs.

MICROFORMS

Various types of films containing micro-images of the texts of newspapers, books, magazines, etc. For example, microfiche are 4" x 5" sheets of photographic film containing up to 72 pages of text per sheet. Microforms are used to conserve space and to preserve materials.

MLS

Meridian Library System. Serves 16 counties in central Nebraska and has its office in Kearney. The regional library system provides continuing education, consulting and cooperative activities and services to regional system member libraries.

M.L.S.

Master of Library Science degree. The professional degree of the library profession obtained through library schools accredited by the American Library Association.

MOTION PICTURE PUBLIC PERFORMANCE LICENSE

Allows public libraries to show motion pictures as part of their library services and programming while complying with copyright laws.

MPLA

Mountain Plains Library Association. This 12-state association, including Nebraska, seeks to improve present and future library services throughout the region. The organization holds annual conferences and produces a newsletter.

NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE FOR THE BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED (NLSBPH)

A division of the Library of Congress which offers free recorded and Braille-embossed books and magazines to individuals who experience visual and other physical conditions which limit their use of regular print. As part of a nationwide network of cooperating libraries, the Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS) serves as a regional library for Nebraska.

N³ (N CUBED)

Nebraska Library Commission Network Services News. A bimonthly publication of the Nebraska Library Commission Network Services Team which promotes and supports libraries in their cooperative efforts to share resources and information.

NCompass

A publication from the Nebraska Library Commission, highlighting library issues, activities and continuing education efforts of the Nebraska Library Commission and other library groups.

NEBASE

The OCLC-affiliated regional network for libraries in Nebraska that provides services and continuing education activities related to OCLC products and services.

NEBRASKA INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM HANDBOOK

Contains information and documents concerning the protection of Intellectual Freedom in Nebraska.

NEBRASKA LIBRARY COMMISSION (NLC)

The state agency established in 1901 with responsibility for promotion, development and coordination of library services throughout the state and for supervising federal fund programs for libraries.

NEBRASKA LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES (See League of Nebraska Municipalities)**NebraskAccess**

Collection of databases which Nebraska residents can search for access to full-text magazine, journal and newspaper articles, as well as genealogy information. NebraskAccess is provided by the Nebraska Library Commission with funding from the State of Nebraska.

NLS

Northeast Library System. Serves 20 counties in northeast Nebraska, with an office in Columbus. The regional library system provides continuing education, consulting and cooperative activities and services to regional system member libraries.

NEMA

Nebraska Educational Media Association. Organized in 1968 to improve school library media centers and the professional status of school library media specialists.

NEON

Now outmoded term which in the past was applied to the Nebraska state catalog of materials which resides on and is a part of the OCLC System.

NLA

Nebraska Library Association. Organized in 1895. The membership includes librarians from all types of libraries, trustees, Friends of Libraries group members, and students. Major sections and round tables are:

Public Library Section (PLS)

College and University Library Section (C&U)

School, Children and Young People Section (SCYP)

Special and Institutional Section (S&I)

Trustees, Users and Friends' Section (TUFS)

Paraprofessional Section

Technical Services Round Table (TSRT)

New Members Round Table (NMRT)

Information Technology and Access Round Table (ITART)

OCLC

Online Computer Library Center. A not-for-profit library service and research organization located in Dublin, Ohio. Libraries use OCLC services and products to catalog library materials, arrange interlibrary loans, and maintain location information on library materials.

OPAC

Online public access catalog. This is a list of a library's materials that can be searched via computer for customers to use either at the library or through Internet access.

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Programs provided by a library to people who are unable to use the library directly because of qualifying restrictions.

PLA

Public Library Association. A division within the American Library Association that is devoted to public library staff and services.

PLS

Panhandle Library System. Serves 14 counties in western Nebraska with an office in Scottsbluff. The regional library system provides continuing education, consulting and cooperative activities and services to regional system member libraries.

PUBLIC LIBRARY ACCREDITATION (See Accreditation Guidelines)**REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEMS (See Systems)****RESOURCE SHARING**

The cooperative arrangement among libraries to make available the resources of a library for use by the patrons of another library, usually through interlibrary loan or reciprocal borrowing.

RETROSPECTIVE CONVERSION

The process of converting cataloged library records into computer files. Retrospective conversion is undertaken in preparation for installation of a local library computer system or for a cooperative resource-sharing project.

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Guidelines for conducting meetings.

RVLS

Republican Valley Library System. Serves 20 counties in south-central Nebraska and has an office in Hastings. The regional library system provides continuing education, consulting and cooperative activities and services to regional system member libraries.

SACL

State Advisory Council on Libraries. Established by the Nebraska Library Commission to advise on statewide planning, policies and programs concerning library issues.

SELS

Southeast Library System. Serves 15 counties in southeast Nebraska and has an office in Lincoln. The regional library system provides continuing education, consulting and cooperative activities and services to regional system member libraries.

SYSTEMS

In Nebraska, these are 6 multi-county, non-profit 501 (c)(3) organizations established to plan, develop, and coordinate cooperative programs and services for the benefit of libraries and media centers in their regions. The six systems are governed by elected boards of directors and receive state and federal funding from the Nebraska Library Commission to carry out their programs and services.

TBBS

Talking Book and Braille Service. This department of the Nebraska Library Commission offers statewide service to Nebraskans who have visual or other physical conditions which limit their use of regular print. Books, magazines and a newsletter are provided in recorded and Braille formats.

TUFS

Trustees, Users and Friends' section of the Nebraska Library Association.

URL

Uniform Resource Locator. Address of a website.

USA PATRIOT ACT

The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001 ("USA PATRIOT Act") which became law on October 26, 2001. This act amended over 15 federal statutes, including the laws governing criminal procedure, computer fraud and abuse, foreign intelligence, wiretapping, immigration and those governing the privacy and confidentiality of library records and library patrons.

WEEDING

Process of removing from a library collection materials that are outdated, in poor physical condition, or no longer used.

WORLD WIDE WEB (WWW)

One part of the Internet in which information on the Internet is presented as hypertext and hypermedia. The user uses a Web Browser (e.g., Netscape, Internet Explorer, Firefox) as an interface to information and hyperlinks. By clicking on hyperlinks, the user sees additional information.

EVALUATION FORM
Glossary



We need your continued feedback! ☺ Please make a copy of this form before completing it. Your library board can earn ½ hour of continuing education credits for each completed survey that is mailed to the Nebraska Library Commission! Please be sure to fill in the name of the individual and name of public library so that credit will be applied for board certification.

Name _____

Public Library _____

31. Do you feel the topics covered in this section are relevant to your library; your board? If no, please explain.
32. What other topics would you like to see addressed in the “**Glossary**”?
33. What, if any, information is provided that you feel is incomplete that you would like to see expanded?
34. What information presented did you find particularly helpful?
35. Do you feel there is information presented that is unnecessary? If yes, please explain:
36. If the information presented in a clear and concise format? Yes___ No___
Do you like the format? Yes___ No___
If no, what suggestions would you make to improve the format?
7. Were there terms or references presented that you did not understand?
If yes, please explain:
13. Are the links to further references helpful? Yes___ No___
Do you think you will use them? Yes___ No___

Mail completed form to: Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 “N” Street, Suite 120 Lincoln, NE 68508.

Index

A

Accreditation, 93
 checklist, 41
 definition, 26
 Enhanced level, 35
 Essential level, 31
 Excellent level, 38
 levels, 30
 process, 28
 requirements, 27
Acquisitions, 93
Administrative
 policies, 22
Administrative board, 1, 93
Advisory board, 89, 93
 duties, 91
Advocacy, 75, 93
American Libraries, 83
American Library Association, 83, 93
Americans with Disabilities Act, 57
Association for Library Trustees and Advocates, 93

B

Bibliostat™ Collect, 44, 93
Board member
 selection, 2
 self-evaluation, 12
 term limits, 3
Budget, 59
 implementation, 60
 presentation, 60
 process, 59
 revenue sources, 61
 sample, 63
 state aid, 61
Building projects, 54
 community support, 56
 steps, 55

C

Children's Internet Protection Act, 94
Circulation, 21, 94
 policies, 21
Confidentiality, 22
Consumer Health Information Resource Service, 94
Copyright, 94

D

Database
 definition, 44
Depository library, 94
Disaster planning, 57

E

Eastern Express, 87
Eastern Library System, 87, 94
E-mail, 94
E-rate, 94
Executive session, 95

F

Freedom to Read Statement, 23
Freedom to View Statement, 23
Friends group, 95
Friends of Libraries U.S.A., 84
Friends of the Library, 76
 board relationship, 78
 organizing, 77
Fund-raising, 62

G

Golden Sower Award, 95

I

Intellectual freedom, 23
 defense, 23
 definition, 23
Intellectual Freedom, 95
Interlibrary Loan, 95
Interlocal Cooperation Act, 15
Internet, 95

L

League of Nebraska Municipalities, 95
Lender compensation, 95
Library Bill of Rights, 23
Library board
 bylaws, 6
 definition, 1
 effectiveness, 3
 evaluation, 10
 meetings, 6,7,8,9
 orientation, 7,8

- planning, 51
- policies, 19
- responsibilities, 4, 5
- Library Board Certification, 45,46
 - credit hours, 46
 - education activities, 46
 - process, 45,46
 - requirements, 45
- Library director
 - advertising, 66
 - budget implementation, 60
 - evaluation, 68,69
 - evaluation form, 72
 - exit interview, 65
 - hiring, 64
 - job description, 70,71
 - orientation, 68
 - qualifications, 66
 - responsibilities, 5
 - search committee, 67
- Library foundation, 79,80
 - board relationship, 79
 - establishing, 80
- Library Services and Technology Act, 61, 96
- Library staff
 - board relationship, 69
- Lobbying, 73
 - writing state legislator, 74

M

- M.L.S, 96
- Machine Readable Cataloging, 96
- Meetings
 - agenda, 7
 - executive session, 9
 - open meetings, 9
 - parliamentary procedure, 7
- Meridian Library System, 88, 96
- Meridian Monitor*, 88
- Mountain Plains Library Association, 84, 96

N

- N Cubed, 97
- NCompass, 97
- NEBASE, 97
- Nebraska Arts Council, 62
- Nebraska Community Foundation, 81
- Nebraska Educational Media Association, 97
- Nebraska Humanities Council, 62
- Nebraska Intellectual Freedom Handbook, 25

- Nebraska Library Association, 85, 98
 - TUFS, 85
- Nebraska Library Association Quarterly*, 85
- Nebraska Library Commission, 85, 86, 97
- Nebraska Library Systems, 86, 87-88
- NebraskaAccess, 97
- NLCCommunicator*, 86
- NLSBPH, 96
- Northeast Library System, 87, 97

O

- Online Computer Library Center, 98
- Online public access catalog, 98
- Open Meetings Law, 9
- Outreach programs, 98

P

- Panhandle Library System, 88, 98
- Panhandle Sun*, 88
- Plan
 - outline, 54
- Planning
 - benefits, 50
 - community profiles, 58
 - gathering information, 52, 53
 - process, 51, 52
 - survey, 53
- Public Librarian Certification, 47
 - Basic Skills, 47
 - credit hours, 47
 - levels, 48
 - provisional certificate, 47
 - renewal, 49
 - requirements, 47
- Public libraries
 - budget, 59
 - founded, 15
 - laws, 1, 15, 18
 - legal basis, 15
 - personnel, 64
 - plan, 50
 - policies, 19
 - policy development, 20
 - policy manual, 20
 - policy samples, 22
 - procedures, 19
 - staff development, 64
 - technology, 56
- Public Libraries*, 84
- Public Library Association, 84, 98

Public Services
 barriers, 57
 policies, 21, 22

R

Reconsideration of Library Materials form, 24
Republican Valley Library System, 87, 99
Resource sharing, 98
Retrospective conversion, 99
Robert's Rules Of Order, 7

S

SoLiS, 88
Southeast Library System, 88, 99
State Advisory Council on Libraries, 86, 99
State Aid to Public Libraries, 61
Statistics
 Federal data elements, 44
 Legal Service Area, 44
Straight Talk, 87
Systems, 99

T

Talking Book and Braille Services, 85, 99
Trustee
 budget, 59
 budget implementation, 60
 budget presentation, 60
 ethics, 17
 hiring director, 64
 liabilities, 16
 responsibilities, 16

U

USA PATRIOT Act, 99

V

VALLEYTALK, 87
Volunteers, 78

W

Weeding, 100

